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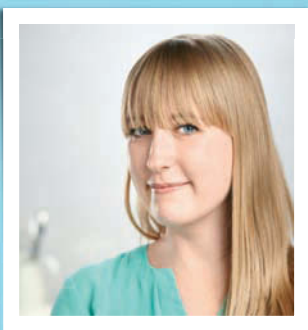
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Welcome to COOK VEGETARIAN



I think I was probably destined to be a veggie. As a child, I would greedily gobble up all my vegetables but push the meat around my plate, finding ever more ingenious ways to feed it to the dog. When I got to the age of eight and discovered vegetarianism, it was like a light bulb went off and I realised that I didn't have to eat animal products.

I could get by very well on a diet of greens so long as I paid attention to my nutrients. Since then, my love for greens has only grown and I've never looked back.

That's why, this issue I'm very excited to showcase the best ways to cook them in our 'Eat your greens!' special. Choose from Sophie Wright's ten recipes for spring veg (p22) or our five delicious ways with asparagus (p47). Elsewhere, take a stroll with Raymond Blanc through his kitchen garden (p41) or even dabble with the paleo diet with our plant-based ideas on p24, (no, we didn't think vegan paleo was possible either!).

Davina McCall also shows us how giving up sugar could leave you full of energy on p7, while Madhur Jaffrey teaches us how to make the perfect lentil curry on p58. And if you're interested in learning a few new techniques, Italian cuisine aficionado Theo Randall starts a new series with *Cook Vegetarian* that will show readers how to make the classic Italian sauces, because after all, who doesn't love a bowl of perfectly prepared pasta?

So, if you love your greens like me, or are looking to improve your cooking, there's something for everyone in the May issue of *Cook Vegetarian*.

Happy cooking!

Fae x

EMAIL: FAE@COOKVEG.CO.UK

FOR TIPS
ON HOW TO
PREPARE
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FREEZES WELL



QUICK MAKE



COST CUTTING



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GLUTEN FREE



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Better one of the best cuisines in the world with our Italian cooking know-how

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COVER RECIPE TAKEN FROM KEW ON A PLATE WITH RAYMOND BLANC (£21, HEADLINE). PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEAN CAZALS.



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Oh, sugar!

2015 is set to be the year of the sugar-free diet, so get ahead of the curve with these mouth-watering recipes from **Davina McCall**



Are you addicted to sugar? Davina McCall certainly was. How did she know? "I used to have three teaspoons of sugar in my tea," she admits. "I used to eat five bags (at least!) of Haribos on a Friday night when filming Big Brother. I've stolen chocolate from my children's secret stashes and not told them. I've even scoffed chocolate last thing at night, just before cleaning my teeth." And each time she binged on sugar, she'd feel rubbish. She would have slumps in energy and would gain weight – even her skin felt prickly! Once she started reading about the health benefits of cutting back on sugar, she thought she'd give it a go. Fancy trying it too? Begin with these easy recipes below, that even include the classic sweet – clafoutis. Cut back and tuck in today!

CAULIFLOWER CHEESE



Serves 4

Ready in 40 mins

1 large cauliflower, broken into florets
50g butter
50g wholemeal spelt flour
500ml full-fat milk

100g vegetarian Cheddar cheese (or similar hard cheese), grated
2 or 3 tomatoes, sliced
25g wholemeal breadcrumbs (optional)
salt and black pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 220C/425F/ Gas 7.

2 Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil. Add the cauliflower florets and cook for 3-4 minutes. Drain and refresh under cold water.

3 To make the cheese sauce, melt the butter in a saucepan. Add the flour and stir thoroughly for a couple of minutes to cook the flour. Gradually add the milk, about 100ml at a time, stirring, until you have a smooth if runny sauce.

4 Turn up the heat slightly and continue to stir the sauce until it comes to the boil and thickens. Season with salt and pepper. Add 75g of the cheese and stir.

5 Put the cauliflower in an ovenproof dish and pour the sauce over it. Arrange the slices of tomato on top. Mix the remaining cheese with the breadcrumbs and sprinkle over the tomatoes. Bake for 15-20 minutes.

PER SERVING: 396 CALS, 24.86 FAT

RISOTTO WITH SPRING VEGETABLES



Serves 4

Ready in 1 hr 15 mins

250g brown risotto rice, soaked overnight
1 tbsp olive oil
10g butter
1 onion, finely chopped





**LIGHT, EASY
DINNER**

1 courgette, finely diced or grated
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
750g vegetable stock
bunch of asparagus (about 200g),
cut into 5cm pieces
150g peas, fresh or frozen
100g spinach
1 tsp lemon zest

To finish

25g butter
25g vegetarian Parmesan-style
cheese, grated, plus extra to serve
handful of fresh basil

- 1 Drain the soaked risotto rice.
- 2 Heat the olive oil and butter in a very wide, straight-sided pan. When the butter is foaming, add the onion, courgette and garlic and fry gently for a few minutes. The courgette will disintegrate but don't worry – it adds creaminess to the dish. Add the rice and cook for another couple of minutes, then pour in all the stock.
- 3 Bring the stock to the boil, turn the heat right down to a slow simmer and cover the pan. Simmer the risotto gently for about 45 minutes – keep checking regularly and giving a quick stir. At the end of the cooking time, taste for seasoning and add salt and pepper if necessary.
- 4 Bring a saucepan of water to the boil. Add the asparagus and cook for a minute. Add the peas and cook for another minute, then the spinach. As soon as the spinach has wilted, drain everything thoroughly.
- 5 When the risotto is cooked to your liking, stir in the vegetables and lemon zest. Finally, add the butter and Parmesan-style cheese and beat thoroughly until they have completely melted into the risotto and the risotto is creamy. Stir in lots of fresh basil.
- 6 Serve with extra Parmesan-style cheese to add at the table.

PER SERVING: 455 CALS, 15.8G FAT

CLEAN
FOOD



CHERRY CLAFOUTIS



Serves 6
Ready in 40 mins

butter, for greasing
500g cherries, pitted
50g spelt flour
50g ground almonds
2 free-range eggs, beaten
200ml full-fat milk
100ml double cream
75ml maple syrup
½ tsp almond extract (to taste)

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/ Gas 4. Grease a 23cm round shallow ovenproof dish with butter. Don't use a loose-bottomed tin as the batter will run out!
- 2 Spread the cherries evenly over the base of the dish.
- 3 Put the spelt flour and almonds in a bowl and add a pinch of salt. Whisk in the eggs, followed by the milk, double cream, maple syrup and almond extract, if using. Pour this batter over the cherries.
- 4 Bake the clafoutis in the oven for 25–30 minutes, until it's golden brown and slightly puffed up. Best served warm with double cream.

PER SERVING: 284 CALS, 17.26 FAT

BOOKSHELF

Recipes taken from *Davina's Five Weeks to Sugar Free** by Davina McCall (£16.99, Orion Books). Photography by Andrew Hayes-Watkins.

*INCLUDES NON-VEGETARIAN CONTENT

Top sugar alternatives

YACON SYRUP (FROM £7.39, WWW.OTESUPERFOODS.COM)

Yacon syrup is a superfood as it's low GI, contains complex sugars, is prebiotic, raw and supports appetite control. It's a great vegan alternative to honey, and we adore its deep malty flavour.



CLARKS CAROB FRUIT SYRUP (£2, OCADO)

has 41% less sugar than refined white sugar per 100g, with a naturally low GI. Use it like you would white sugar or as an alternative in your baking. With a deliciously naturally sweet flavour, it's suitable for vegetarians and vegans.



DAVINA'S SIMPLE RULES TO HEALTHY EATING

- Cut out added sugar. Use only honey and maple syrup and work towards cutting those out as much as possible if you can. When buying maple syrup, check the label and make sure you get the real thing and avoid anything called 'maple-flavoured syrup' which will be mostly corn syrup.
- Cut out white rice, white flour, white pasta and white bread. Instead go for brown rice or barley, wholewheat or spelt pasta, bread and flour. And don't worry – there's nothing scary about spelt. It's just another sort of grain and you can buy it everywhere now.
- Don't eat ready meals or processed foods such as ready-made sauces. Yes they are convenient, but many are packed full of sugar to make them taste better.
- Eat plenty of fresh vegetables and fruit. These recipes contain loads.
- Watch out for low-fat foods such as fruit yoghurts, which may be laden with sugar. Buy full-fat plain yoghurt instead.
 - Use butter not margarine, and whole milk, not skimmed.
- Drink plenty of water – still or sparkling. Flavour your water with slices of lemon or orange, cucumber or herbs such as mint or lemongrass for variety.
- Use herbs or spices for flavouring your food and making it extra delicious.



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The Kit List

These gadgets will revolutionise the way you cook!

1. Collapsible Salad Spinner, £23.99,

www.creamsupplies.co.uk

This ingenious spinner makes washing and drying fruit and vegetables a breeze – it also collapses to allow for more handy storage space

2. Soyabella Nut Milk Maker, £109.95, www.tribest.co.uk

Simply add soaked soya beans and water to get fresh soya milk in just 15 minutes. It can also make almond, cashew, hazelnut and other raw nut milks in as little as 30 seconds!

3. Bella Extract Pro Blender, £59.99,

www.bellahousewares.co.uk

This multi-purpose blender comes with two powerful blades;

one for blending and another for grinding herbs, spices and coffee beans. It also comes with a range of lidded tumblers, so you can enjoy a smoothie on the go!

4. Distinta Four Slice Toaster, £99.99, www.delonghi.co.uk

This ultra-stylish, stainless steel toaster boasts an array of helpful features; from a browning control to get that ideal toast texture to an extra deep crumb tray to help keep things tidy

5. Swan Egg Boiler and Toaster, £39.99,

www.swan-brand.co.uk

Have your eggs just the way you like them with this useful counter-top appliance. It can boil up to seven eggs, or poach three, and allows you to serve them either soft, medium or hard



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Kitchen notebook

Find out what's been whetting our appetite this month

5 MINUTES WITH... *Dean Edwards*

His veggie dish of the moment and some recipes for that first taste of spring



What's your favourite spring veg?

British asparagus is the jewel in the crown and will start to appear towards the

end of spring. It has such a short season, so I try and eat as much of it as I possibly can. Griddle some in coconut oil and serve with a soft-boiled egg and a pinch of quality salt. Some of the best things in life are the simplest.

What is your favourite veggie dish at the moment?

I've been having lots of fun with my spiralizer! I make noodles out of carrot, courgette and beetroot, cooked quickly in a dash of coconut oil to hold their texture. Dress it with a homemade pesto and a sprinkle over a few nuts.

What would you have as your last (vegetarian) meal?

I recently developed a recipe for my new book *Feel Good Family Food* which is incredible (even if I do say so myself!). It's a slow-roasted tomato and filo tart. Once you start to cook your tomatoes this way you will never cook them any other! Lay them on a baking tray, scatter with garlic, thyme, balsamic and a good drizzle of oil – they are out of this world.

If we were to cook one thing this month...

Why not try the Moroccan Carrot and Sweet Potato Salad recipe I have developed for the Groovy Food Company? It's healthy, nutritious and crammed full of flavour. There are lots more recipes to check out on the Groovy Foods website too. Visit, www.groovyfood.co.uk.



GET THE LOOK

You don't need to move to the middle of nowhere to have a country kitchen – it's all about the mood you create rather than the location. Your country kitchen should express that it's the busy hub of the home and a comfy place where you can create and relax. To achieve the vibe, think stacked up crockery and on-show utensils, with pops of clashing colours like sky blue and daffodil yellow.

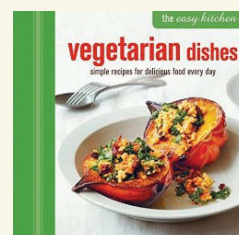
What to do in May

Usher in the new season by sampling the best vegetarian food around

Vegfest UK Bristol on May 23rd-24th is the mecca for vegetarian foodies. There's vegan street food, vegetarian stalls, cookery classes and demos, plus the evenings are packed with live music. Tickets are £3 before 5pm and £5 after. Children under 16 can enter for free. We'll see you there!

VISIT WWW.BRISTOL.VEGFEST.CO.UK

COOKBOOK OF THE MONTH



Quick and easy recipes to take you from Monday through Friday

The Easy Kitchen: Vegetarian Dishes (£9.99, Ryland Peters & Small) is the bible of simple meat-free

recipes. It contains over 50 fuss-free, everyday dishes with stunning photography, a nutritional reference guide and a handy list of pantry staples to keep everything running smoothly in your kitchen. So, whether you want to keep the family happy during the week or entertain friends at the weekend, there's everything from Pesto-stuffed Portobello Mushrooms to Vegetable Goulash to get your culinary juices flowing!



ELDERFLOWER, ORANGE & PASSION FRUIT LAYER CAKE



Serves 8
Ready in 1 hr

For the cake

- * 2 small sweet oranges
- * 3 tbsp Belvoir Elderflower Cordial
- * 300g caster sugar
- * 4 large free-range eggs
- * 250g unsalted butter, cubed
- * 150g plain flour
- * 1 ½ tsp baking powder
- * ½ tsp fine salt
- * 150g ground almonds

For the syrup

- * 3 tbsp Belvoir Elderflower Cordial
- * 1 tbsp caster sugar

For the Elderflower Cream

- * 250g mascarpone
- * 200ml crème fraîche
- * ½ tsp vanilla extract
- * 7-8 tbsp Belvoir Elderflower Cordial
- * 1 tbsp caster sugar
- * 3-4 passion fruits
- * edible flowers

1 Prick the oranges and microwave for 10 minutes. Preheat the oven to 190C/375F

/Gas 5. Butter two 20cm round tins and line with parchment.

2 Melt the butter in a pan and set aside. Sift the flour, baking powder and salt into a bowl, tip in the ground almonds and set aside. Beat the eggs and sugar and fold in the butter, the flour mixture and the orange.

3 Divide between the tins and bake for about 25-30 minutes. Meanwhile make the syrup by mixing the cordial and sugar together. When the cakes come out of the oven, prick all over with a cocktail stick and pour over the syrup.

4 To assemble, split each cake in half horizontally. Mix the mascarpone and then stir in the crème fraîche. Gradually add the vanilla, elderflower cordial and caster sugar.

5 Place one of the four layers of cake onto a cake stand or serving plate. Spread with a quarter of the elderflower cream and a spoonful of the passion fruit. Top with the second layer of cake and repeat until you have four layers of cake. Spread the remaining cream and passion fruit over the top of the cake and decorate with edible flowers.

VEGGIE TIPPLE

ENJOY A GLASS OF VEGGIE-FRIENDLY WINE WITH THE RECIPES IN THIS MONTH'S COOK VEG



English Rosé
The Bolney Foxhole Rosé, £12.99, is a flamboyantly fruity rosé. Available from Waitrose stores



Organic buy
This Running Duck Club Chenin-Sauvignon Blanc, £7.49, is light and crisp. www.exelwines.co.uk



Clean & Fresh
Skye's English Chardonnay 2013, £16.50, is perfect for hot weather drinking. www.hushheath.com

Hot on the shelves

FOOD TO FALL IN LOVE WITH THIS MONTH

1 Real spice

As this Spice Tailor Garlic and Coriander Naan, £1.99, is flame-baked in the traditional tandoori style, it's light, fluffy and makes the perfect scoop for your favourite veggie curry. Available from Waitrose.



2 Get the buzz

Storing your honey in this adorable George Home Honey Pot, £5, will bring a pop of springtime sunshine to your breakfast table.



3 Cracked it

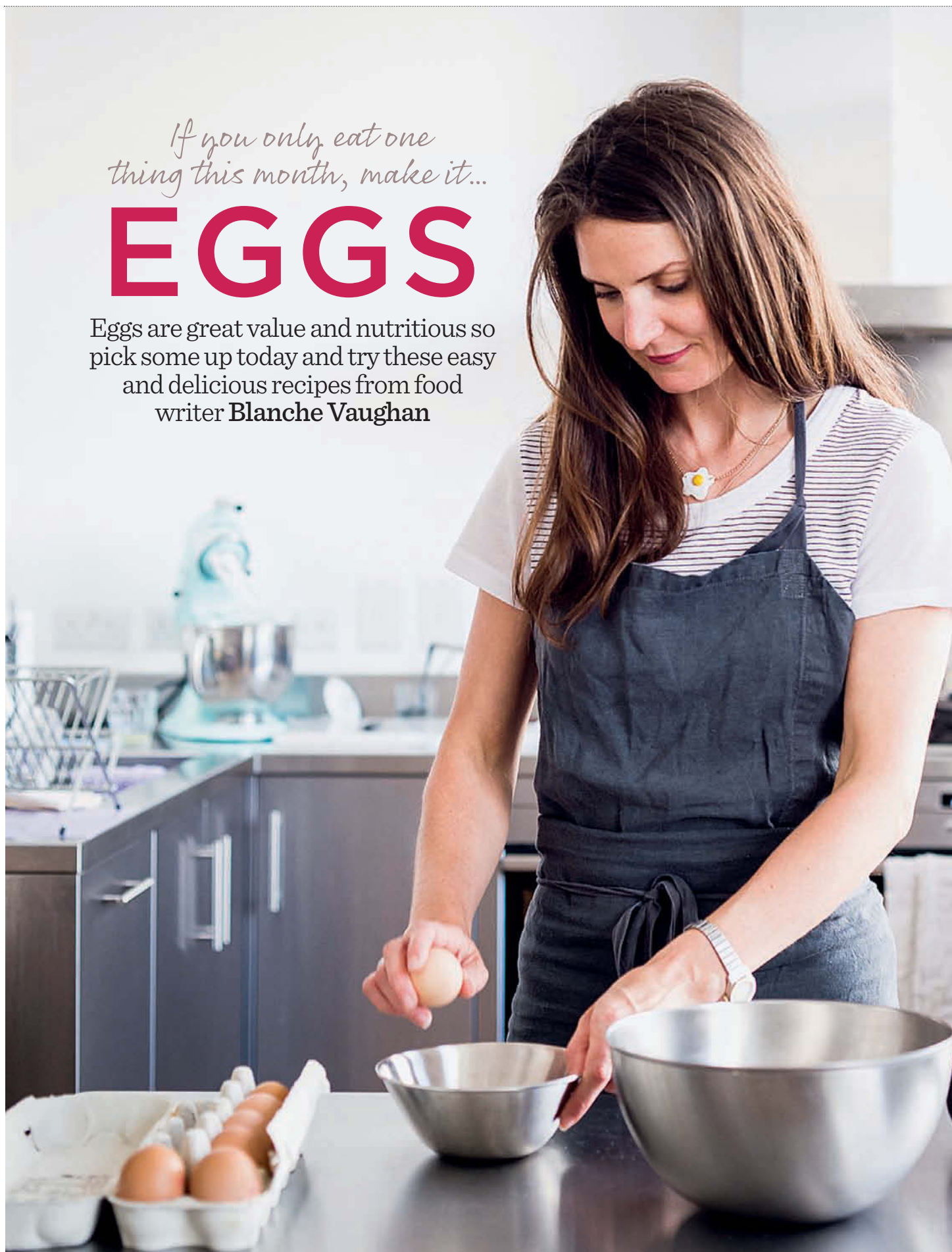
These sumptuous organic Raw Wasabi Crackits, £4.49, are crunchy and crumbly and packed full of nutritious raw almonds, flaxseeds, buckwheat and organic wasabi. They're addictive with cream cheese! For more information, visit www.inspiral.co.uk



*If you only eat one
thing this month, make it...*

EGGS

Eggs are great value and nutritious so pick some up today and try these easy and delicious recipes from food writer **Blanche Vaughan**



BEETROOT SALAD WITH HERBS AND SOFT-BOILED EGGS



Serves 2

Ready in 2 hrs 10 mins

4 beetroot, washed
small bunch of thyme sprigs
4 tsp olive oil
2 soft-boiled free-range (mollet) eggs
3 spring onions, chopped
1 tbsp salted capers, rinsed, drained and chopped
small bunch of flat-leaf parsley chopped
small bunch of fresh dill, chopped
2 tbsp sour cream or crème fraîche
1 tbsp wine vinegar
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/ Gas 6.

2 Put the unpeeled, raw beetroot into a roasting tray with the thyme sprigs, 2 tablespoons of olive oil, a few pinches of salt and a few tablespoons of water. Cover with foil and roast for 1½-2 hours, or until a knife inserted through the middle meets no resistance. Remove and allow to cool slightly before slipping off their skins.

3 Meanwhile cook your soft-boiled eggs.

4 Cut the beetroot into wedges and put them in a bowl with the spring onions, capers and herbs. Mix the sour cream with the vinegar and remaining oil, season well and then stir into the beetroot.

5 Arrange the beetroot salad on a serving dish. Carefully peel the eggs, halve them lengthways and arrange on top.

PER SERVING: 428 CALS, 35.16 FAT

CRISP (FRIZZLED) EGGS WITH SAGE AND CHILLI



Serves 2

Ready in 15 mins

a mixture of olive oil and sunflower oil, to come to a depth of 1cm in

the pan

about 12 sage leaves

2 free-range eggs

2 pinches dried hot chilli flakes

toast, to serve

Greek yoghurt, to serve (optional)

sea salt and freshly ground

black pepper

1 Heat the oil in a deep frying pan until almost smoking hot. Fry the sage leaves for a few seconds on each side to crisp. Remove and drain on kitchen paper.

2 Crack each egg into a glass and slip into the hot oil – this will prevent the hot oil splashing as you drop the eggs in. Fry for a few seconds so the edge



“Roasted beetroot has a wonderfully intense, sweet flavour but the long cooking time means it’s not ideal when you want a quick salad. I usually roast a whole tray at once, when I have time, and then use the beetroot for different things through-out the week – including this salad, which makes a good lunch dish. Otherwise, if you don’t have time to roast beetroot from raw, pre-cooked beetroot are easy to find”



SPINACH, MARJORAM AND RICOTTA SFORMATA



Serves 4

Ready in 35 mins

1 tsp unsalted butter, plus extra to butter the dish
50g vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese, grated
500g spinach, washed and large stalks removed
300g ricotta
6 free-range eggs
300g crème fraîche
few gratings of nutmeg
2 tbsp chopped fresh marjoram
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6. Butter an oval 30x20cm ovenproof baking dish and dust all over with a tablespoon of the grated Parmesan-style cheese.

2 Melt the teaspoon of butter in a large, lidded pan and throw in the spinach with just the water clinging to its leaves. Season with salt and pepper, stir briefly then put on a lid so it steams and wilts, this should take about two minutes.

3 Tip the cooked spinach into a sieve and squeeze any excess moisture out, before chopping roughly.

4 In a bowl, whisk the ricotta to break up any lumps, add the eggs and continue whisking so that bubbles form. Stir in the crème fraîche, nutmeg, marjoram and remaining Parmesan-style cheese. Finally stir in the chopped spinach and pour into the prepared dish.

5 Bake in the preheated oven for 25 minutes or until the top is slightly risen and browned and the centre of the sformata feels slightly firm to the touch.

PER SERVING: 535 CALS, 44.86 FAT

“Sformata is an Italian dish, similar to a soufflé or rather like a baked flan but without the pastry shell – the word sformata means misshapen! Leafy greens like spinach or chard have a real affinity with the soft, fragrant taste of marjoram or oregano”

of the white starts to brown and crisp. When the white becomes opaque and the yolks are still runny, transfer to a plate lined with kitchen paper to drain away any excess oil.

3 Serve on toast with the sage leaves and chilli flakes sprinkled on top. Season well with salt and pepper. A dollop of thick Greek yoghurt goes very well with this.

4 Any excess oil can be reused – when completely cool, just strain it into a bottle and seal and store until needed.

PER SERVING: 404 CALS, 30.86 FAT

BOOKSHELF

Recipes taken from **Blance Vaughan's Egg: The Very Best Recipes inspired by the Simple Egg** (£22, Weidenfeld & Nicolson). Photography by Paul Winch-Furness.

*INCLUDES NON-VEGETARIAN CONTENT



“This is a very satisfying breakfast when you need to blow the cobwebs away. Once you’ve got the knack of frizzling, you can try using other flavours with the eggs – ground allspice and parsley, or tarragon and vinegar are other delicious additions”



MORE THAN JUST A SMOOTHIE MIX



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Recipe of the THE MONTH

The addition of zingy ginger makes this everyday apple pie from **Valentine Warner** sublime

VALENTINE WARNER'S BRAMLEY APPLE AND GINGER PIE



Serves 4

Ready in 1 hr

1 packet of ready-made sweet pastry or shortcrust pastry
4 large Bramley apples, peeled, cored and roughly chopped
30g butter, optional
2 thumb-sized pieces of fresh ginger, peeled and grated finely
6 balls of stem ginger, roughly chopped
stem ginger syrup from a jar
½ tsp fresh lemon thyme leaves, finely chopped (thyme will also work)
3 free-range egg yolks
1 whole free-range egg
2 tsp fennel seeds
golden caster sugar, optional

- 1** Preheat the oven to 220C/425F/Gas 7.
- 2** Put the apples in a pan with all of the stem ginger syrup, butter and the finely chopped thyme leaves.
- 3** Grate the fresh ginger finely then pick it up and squeeze all the juice into the pan and discard the pulp.
- 4** Bring the apples to a simmer and put a lid on the pan. Poach until tender. Remove the lid and rapidly simmer until all obvious wateriness has evaporated. Allow the mixture to cool then beat in the egg yolks.
- 5** Stir in the stem ginger.
- 6** Lightly flour the work surface and then roll out the pastry only a little thicker than a £1 coin. When at the desired thickness, scatter

the fennel seeds over the pastry and lightly roll them into it.

7 Cut a few long strips of pastry from around the outside and arrange them around the rim of a small/medium pie dish. Spoon the apple mixture into the dish and put a pie chimney in the middle. Lay the pastry over the top making a small incision to let the pie chimney through. Trim around the side of the dish and crimp the border and pastry lid together.

8 Beat the remaining egg well and brush the top of the pie all over with egg wash then scatter liberally with the caster sugar.

10 Bake until the pastry is golden brown, approximately 25-35 minutes.

PER SERVING: 659 CALS, 40.1G FAT



New Shoots

Sophie Wright celebrates the vibrant fruit and vegetables that spring boasts with her simple dishes, perfect to have up your (green) sleeves



RISOTTO VERDE



In a sauté pan, cook **200g washed baby leaf spinach** with **30g basil** and **30g parsley**. Remove from the pan and place into a blender along with **50g pine nuts**, **50g grated vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese** and **100ml extra virgin olive oil**. Heat **700ml gluten-free vegetable stock** in a saucepan. Chop **1 small white onion**, **1 celery stick** and **2 garlic cloves**. Pour **2 tbsp rapeseed oil** into a sauté pan and turn the heat to low. Add the chopped ingredients and sweat until soft. Add **100g Arborio rice** and stir before adding **125ml vegetarian white wine**. Turn up the heat and cook until the wine has all been absorbed by the rice. Now add 2 ladles of the hot stock and continue to stir the risotto until it has been absorbed. Repeat this process until all the stock has been

used up and the rice is al dente. Stir through the green paste. Season with salt and pepper and add the zest of **1 unwaxed lemon**.

BROCCOLI AND WALNUT PISTOU WITH WHOLE WHEAT PASTA



Boil or steam **125g broccoli florets**, including the stalks. Place the cooked broccoli into a food processor with **100g walnuts**, **2 peeled garlic cloves**, **½ deseeded red chilli**, the juice and zest of **1 large unwaxed lemon**, **75g vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese** and **150ml extra virgin olive oil**. Blend to a chunky textured paste. Boil **250g dried whole wheat pasta** until cooked al dente. While the pasta is cooking, place **50g butter** into a frying pan and add **30g fresh breadcrumbs**. Toast the breadcrumbs on a medium heat in the butter until golden. Add **15g chopped parsley** and the zest of **1 unwaxed lemon**. Mix through the sauce until it has completely coated the pasta. Serve with **extra vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese** and the butter-toasted breadcrumbs.

GOOSEBERRY AND ELDERFLOWER FROZEN YOGHURT



Place **400g washed gooseberries** into a pan and add **200g caster sugar** and 2-3 tbsp of water. Simmer on a low heat until the gooseberries have softened. This should take around

10 minutes. Pour the gooseberries into a blender with **75ml elderflower cordial** and blend until smooth. Now add **500ml Greek yoghurt** and **100ml milk**. Blend again. Pour the contents into an ice-cold rectangle container and place into the freezer. Stir the contents every 20 minutes until it has frozen hard. Serve the frozen yoghurt with some fresh berries.

ALL RECIPES
SERVE 2

COURGETTINI WITH RICOTTA, CHILLI, PEAS AND MINT



Spiralise **2 large courgettes**. In a bowl, place **150g defrosted peas** and squash them with the back of a fork. Finely chop **1 large red chilli**, with or without the seeds, and shred **20g fresh mint** leaves. Mix all the ingredients together with **75g ricotta cheese** and dress with the juice of **1 large lemon**, **4-5 tbsp of extra virgin olive oil** and salt and pepper. Sprinkle with **sunflower seeds** and serve.

OVEN-BAKED BABY GEM, PEAS AND SPRING ONIONS



Halve **3 heads of baby gem lettuces** and place them into a roasting pan, cut side up. Wash and trim **8-10 spring onions** and add them to the lettuces along with **150g fresh peas**. Pour in **150ml hot gluten-free vegetable stock**, and season with salt and pepper. Cover with foil and back at

190C/375F/Gas 5 for 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and grate **75g vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese**. Place back into the oven with the foil off for 10 minutes until the cheese has melted and started to brown slightly. Finish with **15g chopped marjoram**, a **glug of extra virgin olive oil** and the **zest of 1 unwaxed lemon**.

HONEYDEW MELON AND VODKA GRANITE



Peel, deseed and roughly chop **1 Honeydew melon**. Place the flesh into a blender. Blitz until smooth with the **juice of 2 limes**, **100ml water** and **100ml vodka**. Pour the contents into an ice-cold rectangle, shallow container and place in the freezer. Leave for 1 hour before stirring with a fork to break up the ice crystals. Continue to do this every 20 minutes until it is completely frozen into fine ice crystals. Serve in chilled glasses from the freezer as a refreshing dessert.

CELERY, GREEN GRAPE AND APPLE SALAD



Wash and trim **4-6 celery sticks**. Slice them finely on the angle and place in a large mixing bowl. Quarter **100g green grapes** and add the celery along with **75g chopped walnuts** and **1 grated large green apple**. Make a mayonnaise by mixing **1 free-range egg yolk** with **1 heaped tsp Dijon mustard**. Then, slowly add **250ml rapeseed oil** while continuously mixing with a small sauce whisk. Add the **juice of ½ a lemon** and season with salt and pepper. Add **15g chopped parsley**. Add 2-3 tbsp of the mayonnaise to the salad to bind it together. Check for seasoning and serve with crusty bread.

GREEN GAZPACHO



Place **100g of washed baby leaf spinach**, **2 chopped garlic cloves**, **15g parsley**, **15g mint**, **15g basil**, **1 cucumber**, **½ green chilli**, **1 ripe**

avocado, **1 courgette**, **4 spring onions**, **150g natural yoghurt** and **100ml extra virgin olive oil** in a food processor. Blend until you have a smooth soup. Season well with **salt**, **white pepper** and the **juice of 1-2 lemons**. Blend again and chill until ice cold. Serve with an ice cube in each bowl and a **drizzle of extra virgin olive oil**.

WARM ASPARAGUS, BROAD BEAN AND ARTICHOKE SALAD WITH BLANCHED ALMONDS



In a small pan, simmer **1 tbsp Dijon mustard**, the **juice of 1 lemon**, **1 tsp runny honey**, **1 tbsp chopped oregano** and **4-5 tbsp extra virgin olive oil**. Mix well, season with salt and pepper and once hot, leave in a warm place. Peel **10-12 spears asparagus** and steam or boil until just cooked. Shell **100g broad beans** and cook for a few minutes until al dente. Quarter **8 marinated artichoke hearts** and **crumble 75g goat's cheese**. Mix all the ingredients while warm in a large mixing bowl. Drizzle over the warm dressing and sprinkle with a **few chopped, blanched almonds**.

KIWI, SPINACH AND AVOCADO BREAKFAST SMOOTHIE



Peel and chop **2 kiwis**, **1 ripe avocado** and **1 ripe banana**. Place into a blender and add **100ml semi-skimmed milk** and **100ml water**. Blend until smooth. Now add a handful of washed **baby leaf spinach** and blend again. Squeeze in the **juice of ½ a lime** and drink straight away.

Dinner upgrades

Having a go-to repertoire of recipes, like the ideas here, eases that 5 o'clock panic when dinner has slipped your mind, but if you're not tweaking and evolving your skill set, things can become dull in the kitchen. Try these upgrades to keep your guests knocking at the door:

- Speciality salsas can make any meal brilliant. Try this: 2 segmented and chopped blood oranges, 1 segmented and chopped Clementine, 2 tbsp chopped red onion, ½ chopped jalapeño, 2 tbsp freshly chopped coriander and a pinch of salt.

- Buy the babies. Experiment with baby artichokes, turnips, squashes, and carrots. Not only are they more flavourful, but the textures are more tender.

- Fry brown rice. Rather than cooking in boiling water, fry uncooked rice with a teaspoon of olive oil. Then, add a crushed garlic clove and stir in vegetable stock. Simmer until the rice is cooked.

Nature KNOWS BEST

Think the Paleo diet excludes us veggies? Vegan cook **Jenna Zoe** has other ideas



At first glance, paleo and meat-free seem to be a contradiction in terms. But, nutritionist and food lover Jenna Zoe's new book *Plant-based Paleo* shows that by embracing the best from the paleo and vegan diet, you

can create some truly delicious and nutritious healthy dinners.

The paleo, or caveman, diet refers to eating only foods our hunter-gatherer ancestors ate, so think wholesome, unprocessed foods such as leafy greens, vegetables, fruits, nuts and seeds; and exclude refined sugar, dairy and grains. Jenna's philosophy isn't about adhering to a restrictive diet as such, it's about getting to know what works for you. "My book is a judgement-free zone. If you want to add an egg to your dish – go for it," she says. We all know, fad diets come and go, but good recipes stand the test of time. So, try adding a couple of nourishing dinners to your week and experimenting with these recipes.



WILD RICE SALAD



Serves 4

Ready in 60 mins

100g wild rice
1 pomegranate
2 avocados, peeled, pitted and diced
300g cherry tomatoes, halved
a bunch of flat-leaf parsley,
roughly chopped

For the Honey Mustard Dressing

$\frac{3}{4}$ tbsp grain mustard
5 tbsp olive oil
2 tsp honey
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
juice of 1 lemon

1 Bring a saucepan or pot of water to the boil over a medium-high heat. Add the wild rice, reduce the heat and simmer for about 40 minutes, until completely soft. To extract the seeds from the pomegranate, cut it into large sections and put in a large bowl filled with water. The seeds should float to the top, leaving the flesh to sink to the bottom.

2 Combine the pomegranate seeds with the avocado, cherry tomatoes and parsley in a large mixing bowl.

3 To make the honey mustard dressing, mix all of the ingredients together in a bowl and whisk with a fork.

4 Once the wild rice is fully cooked, drain in a fine mesh sieve and rinse under cold running water to cool. Add to the salad mixture with the honey mustard dressing and stir until all the ingredients are well coated. Serve immediately.

PER SERVING: 412 CALS, 5.16 FAT



YOU CAN
SUBSTITUTE
WILD RICE FOR
QUINOA, IF YOU
PREFER

“If you asked me to give you one easy eat to keep in your healthy-eating arsenal, cauli-mash would be at top!”



**LOW-CARB
COMFORT**

AUBERGINE STEAKS WITH CAULI-MASH



Serves 2-3

Ready in 30 mins, plus 4 hours marinating and chilling

1 large aubergine
60ml low-sodium soy sauce
60ml mirin
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
3 spring onions, sliced, plus extra to serve
olive oil spray

For the Cauli-mash

1 head cauliflower, roughly chopped
3 garlic cloves
3 tbsp olive oil, plus extra to serve
2 tsp chopped fresh chives
½ tsp chopped fresh thyme
salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Slice the aubergine into rounds, about a ½ inch thick, and place them in a casserole dish.

2 Mix the soy sauce, mirin, balsamic vinegar and spring onions together in a small bowl, then heat in a frying pan set over a medium heat for a few minutes, allowing the liquid to thicken.

3 Pour the soy marinade over the aubergine rounds in a casserole dish. Make sure the aubergines are fully covered and set aside for two hours to let the vegetables soak up the flavour.

4 To make the cauli-mash, preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6. Steam the cauliflower in a metal colander set over a pan of boiling water, until soft. Roast the three garlic cloves with the skin on in the preheated oven. Remove the skin and blitz in a food processor with the steamed cauliflower and the rest of the ingredients. Pulse until the mixture is smooth and creamy, then chill in the fridge for two hours.

5 Set a clean, dry frying pan over a medium heat and spray it with olive oil. Sauté the marinated aubergine slices in small batches, until they're all fully cooked.

6 Preheat the grill to medium, then grill the sautéed aubergine lightly for five minutes, for extra smokiness. To serve, simply re-heat the cauli-mash in a preheated oven at 180C/350F/ Gas 4 for 3-5 minutes. Spoon onto serving plates and top with the aubergine steaks. Sprinkle with spring onions and drizzle with olive oil.

PER SERVING: 406 CALS, 20.76 FAT



HEMP TABBOULEH WITH PEA AND MINT FALAFEL



Serves 2

Ready in 40 mins

For the Hemp Tabbouleh

80g flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
10g mint, finely chopped
a handful of finely chopped kale
1 large tomato, finely diced
½ white onion, finely diced
10cm piece of cucumber, finely diced
juice of 1 lemon
2 ½ tbsp olive oil, plus extra for the falafel
4 tbsp hemp seeds
2 heaped tbsp pomegranate seeds
sea salt

For the Pea and Mint Falafel

150g cooked peas
10g fresh mint, chopped
1 garlic clove
4 tbsp chopped spring onion
¼ tsp baking soda
2 tsp lemon juice

For the Lemon Tahini Sauce

115g light tahini
1 tbsp lemon juice

1 To make the tabbouleh, toss the chopped parsley, mint and kale together in a large mixing bowl, then add the tomato, onion and cucumber. Pour in the lemon juice and olive oil and mix well. Add the hemp and pomegranate seeds and season with salt. Set aside.

2 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6. Combine all of the falafel ingredients in a food processor and pulse until well incorporated, but still have a little texture. Divide the mixture into 6-8 pieces and roll each one into a ball. Place on a baking sheet, then press down gently in the centre of each ball to form an indent. Lightly brush the tops of the falafel with olive oil. Bake in the preheated oven for 15 minutes, flip the falafel over and bake for another 10 minutes.

3 Meanwhile, to make the sauce, mix the tahini and lemon juice together with one tablespoon of water, using a whisk. Serve the warm pea and mint falafel on a bed of hemp tabbouleh and drizzle over the lemon tahini sauce.

PER SERVING: 794 CALS, 61.26 FAT

BOOKSHELF



Recipes taken from *Plant-based Paleo* by Jenna Zoe (£20, Ryland Peters & Small). Photography by Clare Winfield

THEO RANDALL'S Pasta class

As part of a new series, Italian food expert **Theo Randall** tells us about his favourite ever pasta sauces and shows us how to cook them



Asparagus Carbonara with Fusilli is the first dish I make when British asparagus comes into season. Asparagus is always expensive at this time of year, and this recipe makes one bunch go a long way.

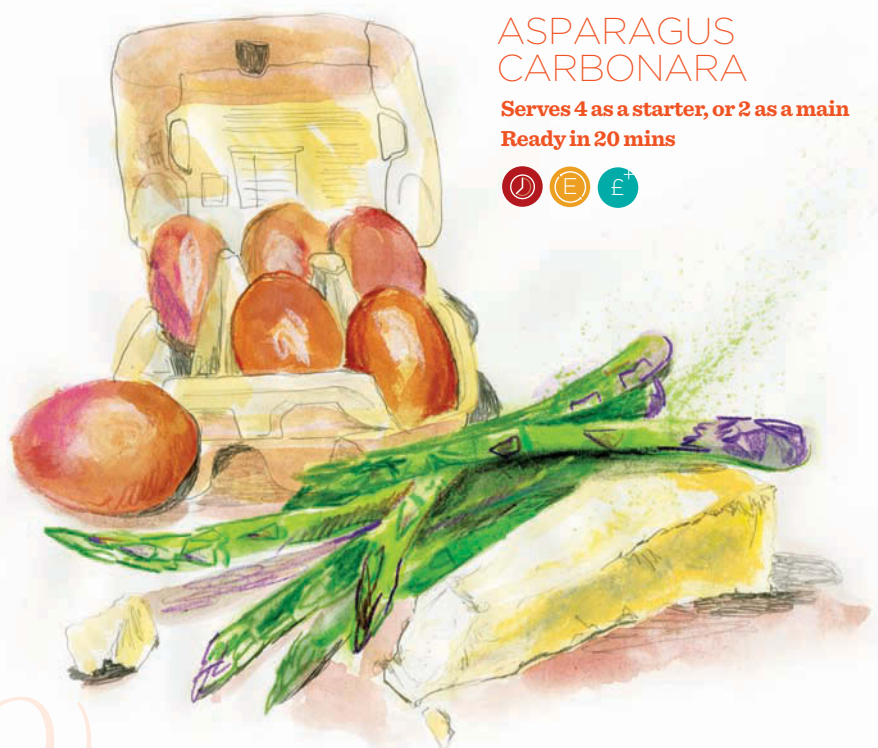
I first had this dish in a restaurant in Verona called Il Pompiere, just off the beautiful Piazza d'Erbe which has a lovely little market most days and sells the most wonderful vegetables. It was made for me using fresh tagliatelle, which was very

delicious, but I feel fusilli works better as the twists have a large surface area with a few nooks and crannies that hold the sauce really well.

Spring flavours

Verona is a great place to visit in springtime as the restaurants are fantastic at cooking the 'Primavera' ingredients like peas, broad beans, Swiss chard, carrots and of course, asparagus. I still think British asparagus is the best but Italian asparagus comes in many shapes and sizes. I found the one preferred for pasta and risotto is what we call 'sprue asparagus' which has a thin head and stem and can be tough almost halfway up the spear. It is always cheaper than the thicker 'select asparagus' we're used to buying, but just as delicious. I have had it in risottos, soups and frittatas, and I always think its flavour gets better the more you cook it, where as select asparagus, which is the most common size we can buy, becomes slimy and unappetising when it is cooked for too long.

ILLUSTRATION: LOUISE ABBOTT



ASPARAGUS CARBONARA

Serves 4 as a starter, or 2 as a main
Ready in 20 mins



400g British asparagus
350g fusilli pasta
4 free-range egg yolks
1 garlic clove, crushed with salt
100g vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

- 1** Peel the ends of asparagus with a potato peeler to remove the tough outer skin, then slice on the diagonal.
- 2** Place the fusilli in a large pot of boiling salted water. Cook for two minutes less than the packet suggests.
- 3** While the pasta is cooking, place the egg yolks into a frying pan that is at room temperature. Add 3 tbsp of the hot pasta cooking water along with the Parmesan-style cheese and garlic paste. Mix together so all ingredients are combined.
- 4** When the pasta has been cooking for three minutes, add the sliced asparagus to the pasta pot. Using a slotted spoon, take out the fusilli and asparagus, and put it into the saucepan with the eggs in.
- 5** Turn on the stove and warm the pan while stirring, taking care not to let it get too hot as the mixture will scramble. Add more of the pasta water to make sure the pasta is juicy and piping hot. Serve in hot bowls or plates with freshly ground black pepper and a little more Parmesan-style cheese.

PER SERVING (2 SERVINGS): 991 CALS, 32.9G FAT

Simple, fresh flavours

SEASONAL INGREDIENTS ARE CHEAPER, TASTIER AND BETTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SO THIS MONTH, MAKE THE MOST OF BRITISH ASPARAGUS

YACON SYRUP

HEALTHY
INGREDIENTS

Have you fallen in love with this sweet, guilt-free **superfood sweetener** yet?

Yacon is fast becoming the must-have ingredient of 2015 for vegans, dieters and, of course, all of us looking to cook delicious and healthy food. The sweet syrup comes from a natural root grown in Peru, known by the locals as a 'Ground Apple' due to its sweet and juicy taste.

Yacon Syrup has been featured as Product of the Week on alkaline food blog HonestlyHealthy-Food.com and quickly became the best seller when it launched online. So what is it about Yacon that has caused such a craze? **Yacon's superb features:**

- ✓ the highest source of complex FOS sugars, a type that **doesn't get absorbed** into the blood stream
- ✓ **extremely low GI**
- ✓ **deliciously sweet and malty taste**
- ✓ is a prebiotic, aids gut health
- ✓ Yacon root is a source of many **vitamins and minerals**, including **iron, potassium and calcium**.



Yacon & Vanilla Apple Pie

INGREDIENTS • 5 dessert apples, peeled and cored • 200g unsalted butter • 115g Yacon syrup • 2 eggs, room temperature • 360g organic self-raising flour • 1 1/2 tsp Vanilla essence • 2 tbsp greek yoghurt

METHOD 1) Preheat oven to 175C. 2) Cut apples into thin crescent slices. 3) Microwave butter until melted and place in a bowl syrup and vanilla, whisk into one mixture. 4) Add in eggs and yoghurt, whisk until the mixture has become light and creamy. 5) Slowly sieve in the flour, whilst whisking until well combined and a heavy, doughy mixture has formed. 6) Line the base of the cake tin with half the dough evenly. 7) Layer half the apples across the dough base, repeat with remaining dough then apples to form another two layers. 8) Bake in oven for 40 minutes, or until firm and golden.



OfThe Earth Superfoods

**MUST
BUY**



Organic Yacon Syrup an ideal cupboard item for those in need of syrups or vegan honey. This syrup is a healthy ingredient in any recipe. Don't use syrups? They have **Ground Yacon & crunchy Yacon Chips** too. Buy online in 150g or 450g at www.OTESuperfoods.com



WASH UP FOR FARM ANIMAL WELFARE

SALES OF DR. BRONNER'S IN THE UK BENEFIT COMPASSION IN WORLD FARMING

From October 2014 – June 2015, leading natural soap brand Dr. Bronner's will donate 20p for every 16oz (473 ml) and 32oz (946 ml) bottle of liquid soap sold in the UK to support Compassion in World Farming, the leading farm animal welfare charity.

Learn more: drbronner.co.uk/compassion



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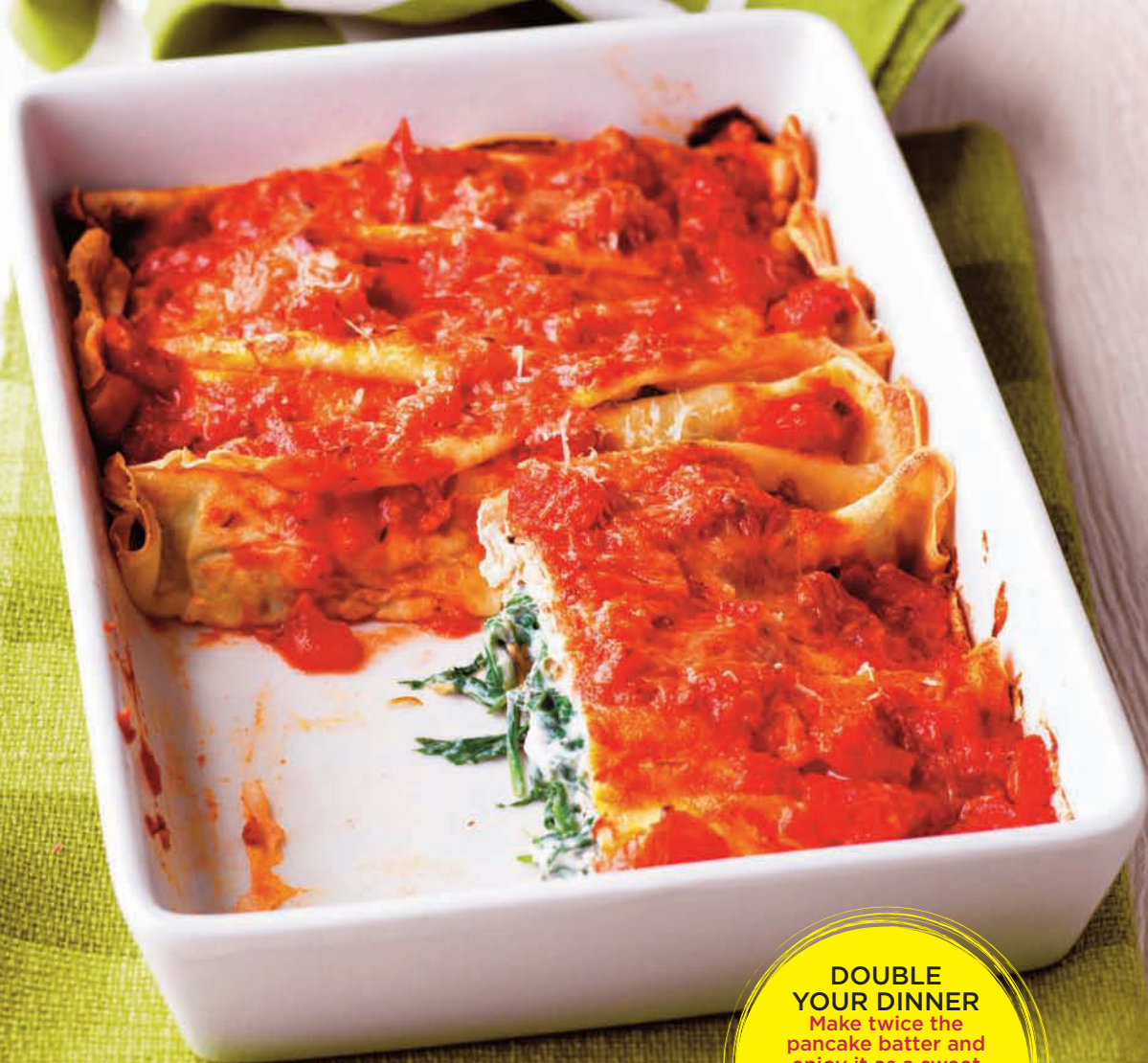
Available from Whole Foods, Planet Organic, Selfridges, John Bell & Croyden, Beauty at Tesco and selected Holland & Barrett stores





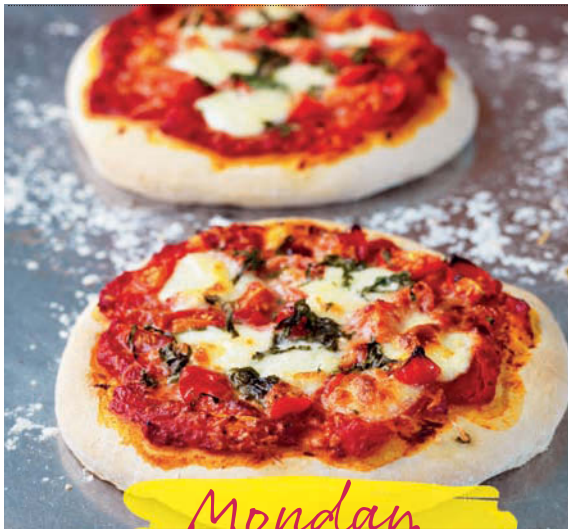
Double your Dinner

Make twice the amount of the Masterclass recipes here and you'll save time later in the week



DOUBLE YOUR DINNER

Make twice the pancake batter and enjoy it as a sweet dessert or indulgent breakfast the following day. Recipe on page 34



Monday

MARGHERITA PIZZA



Serves 4

Ready in 50 mins, plus 1 hr 15 rising

200g strong white bread flour
200g plain white flour, plus 2 tbsp extra for kneading
1 tsp salt
1 tsp fast action dried yeast
2 tsp olive oil
250ml tepid water

To top the pizzas

1 x Speedy Tomato Sauce recipe (see Masterclass)
150g cherry tomatoes, quartered
2 tbsp shredded fresh basil
125g pack reduced-fat mozzarella cheese, drained and diced
25g freshly grated vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese
freshly ground black pepper

1 To make the pizza dough, combine both flours in a large mixing bowl with the salt and yeast. Make a well in the centre and add the olive oil and almost all of the tepid water. (The water should feel just warm – if it is too hot, it may kill off the yeast.) Use a table knife or

kitchen spoon to bring the liquid and flour together, adding just enough additional tepid water to make a soft dough that comes together without it being sticky, leaving the bowl clean.

2 Dust the work surface with 1 tablespoon of the extra flour and start to knead the dough. Using the heel of your hands, roll the dough away from you, pressing down firmly as you do so, then bring the dough back towards you and repeat with the other hand, so you are rolling the dough back and forth, alternating your hands as you roll. Knead for 3-4 minutes until the dough feels soft, springy and elastic. If you prod the dough, the indentation should spring back lightly.

3 Return the dough to the mixing bowl and cover with clingfilm. Leave to rise for one hour or until it has doubled in size. Preheat the oven to 220C/425F/Gas 7.

4 While the dough is rising, make the Speedy Tomato Sauce, following the



DOUBLE YOUR DINNER

Use the stuffing for mushrooms. Bake for 20 minutes in a hot oven. Remove, top with grated vegetarian cheese and bake for a further 10 minutes.

recipe in the Masterclass.

5 Punch the dough down to deflate it then divide it into four balls. Dust two baking trays with a little of the remaining flour and use the rest to roll out the dough. For each pizza, shape a ball of dough into a fat disc then use a rolling pin to gently press down on the dough, starting to flatten it in a neat circle before you roll it out. Use the rolling pin to roll out to a 20 cm (8 inch) disc. Transfer to a baking tray. Repeat for the other dough balls.

6 Spread each pizza with a quarter of the sauce then scatter with the cherry tomatoes, basil, mozzarella and Parmesan-style cheese. Season generously with black pepper and leave to rise for 10-15 minutes.

7 Bake in the oven for 12-15 minutes until the bases are risen, golden brown and crisp at the edges. Swap the trays over after 8-10 minutes.

PER SERVING: 486 CALS, 21.36 FAT

Tuesday

MASTERCLASS SPEEDY TOMATO SAUCE

Serves 4 | Ready in 15 mins

400g can chopped tomatoes, 1 garlic clove, crushed, ½ tsp grated lemon zest, ¼ tsp mixed dried herbs, 1 tsp caster sugar, black pepper

1 Place all the ingredients in a lidded saucepan and bring to the boil. Cover and then simmer for 10 minutes, stirring once or twice, then use in your chosen recipe.

QUORN ROAST WITH HERBY STUFFING BALLS



Serves 4

Ready in 55 mins

1 butternut squash, peeled, de-seeded and cut into wedges

MASTERCLASS: SHORTCRUST PASTRY

Makes 250g (serves 6)
Ready in 5 mins (plus 30 mins
chilling)

150g self-raising flour, 75g low-fat
spread, a pinch of salt

1 Sift the flour into a mixing bowl. Add the low fat spread then use an ordinary table knife to start to cut the spread into smaller pieces, mixing them into the flour as you go.

2 Next, using your fingertips, rub the ingredients together until the mixture looks like breadcrumbs. Lift your fingers up above the bowl as you rub them to incorporate as much air as possible.

3 Stir in a small pinch of salt then gradually add enough cold water to bring the pastry together, without making it at all sticky – you'll probably need about 2 tbsp in total, but stop adding water as soon as the pastry starts to hold together in lumps (adding too much water makes the pastry tough). The mixture will still look quite dry at this stage, but gently bring it together by hand and you will find that the pastry should stick together in a ball, leaving the bowl clean.

4 Wrap the pastry in clingfilm or pop it in a plastic food bag and chill it in the fridge for 30 minutes before rolling out.



calorie controlled cooking spray
8 frozen Quorn fillets
1 heaped tsp honey
1 tsp grainy mustard
2 tsp soy sauce

For the stuffing

1 onion, chopped finely
2 tsp chopped fresh sage
1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme
100ml vegetable stock
75g fresh breadcrumbs
2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
1 tsp grated lemon zest
1 free-range egg, beaten

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6. Arrange the wedges of butternut squash on a large roasting tray and spray lightly with the cooking spray. Drizzle with 4 tbsp of water and roast

in the oven for 15 minutes.

2 Meanwhile, start to make the stuffing. In a lidded saucepan, add the onion, sage and thyme to the stock and cook for five minutes until softened. Remove the lid and cook for two minutes to evaporate the liquid. Mix the cooked onion with the breadcrumbs, parsley, lemon zest and beaten egg then shape into eight stuffing balls.

3 After the initial 15 minutes of cooking time for the squash, remove the tray from the oven. Add the stuffing balls and the Quorn fillets to the tray. Mix the honey, mustard and soy sauce together and drizzle over the Quorn fillets. Roast in the oven for 20 minutes until the squash is tender, the stuffing balls are golden brown and the Quorn fillets are piping hot.

PER SERVING: 251 CALS, 46 FAT

Wednesday

QUORN PASTIES



Makes 4

Ready in 1 hr 10 mins (plus 30 mins
chilling and cooling)

1 x Shortcrust Pastry recipe (see
Masterclass) + 2 tsp plain flour, for
rolling out

1 small onion, chopped finely

1 carrot, peeled and diced

200ml vegetable stock

150g Quorn mince (frozen or chilled)

a pinch of dried mixed herbs

1 tbsp tomato ketchup

EVERYDAY



40g frozen peas
2 tsp skimmed milk, to glaze

- 1 Make up the pastry following the recipe in the Masterclass. Wrap and chill for 30 minutes.
 - 2 Place the onion and carrot in a lidded saucepan with 4 tbsp of stock and cook, covered, for six minutes. Remove the lid and cook for two minutes more, until all the liquid has evaporated.
 - 3 Add the Quorn mince, dried herbs, the ketchup and the rest of the stock to the pan. Cover, bring to the boil and simmer uncovered for five minutes.
 - 4 Stir in the frozen peas then tip the mixture out on to a plate and leave to cool to room temperature. Preheat the oven to 200C (fan 180C)/400F/Gas 6.
 - 5 Divide the pastry into four balls. Dust the work surface lightly with flour and roll each ball out to an 18cm (7 in) disc. Place on a floured baking tray and brush the edges of each circle with a little milk.
 - 6 Spoon a quarter of the cooled mince mixture on to each pastry disc, placing the mince to one side. Fold the pastry over to give a half moon shape. Press the edges together to seal. You can press down using a fork to give a decorative finish, or use your fingers to crimp the edge.
 - 7 Brush the top of each pasty with milk. Bake in the oven for 15 minutes until golden brown and crisp. Serve warm or cool. If cooling them before eating, place on a wire rack so that the pastry stays crisp underneath.
- PER SERVING: 291 CALS, 6.3G FAT

Thursday

SPINACH RICOTTA PANCAKES



Serves 4
Ready in 55 mins

1 x Perfect Pancakes recipe (see Masterclass)
225g fresh young leaf spinach
2 garlic cloves, crushed
125g ricotta cheese
100g low-fat soft cheese
freshly grated nutmeg
25g freshly grated vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese
500g carton passata with basil

- 1 Make the Perfect Pancakes following the recipe in the Masterclass and set aside.
 - 2 Preheat the oven to 200C(180C fan)/400F/Gas 6. Place the spinach and garlic in a large pan and cook, stirring, until the spinach wilts. Drain in a colander and press to extract most of the liquid then chop the spinach.
 - 3 Mix the ricotta and soft cheese together with the spinach and a generous seasoning of nutmeg. Reserve 2 heaped tsp of the hard Italian cheese then mix the rest into the spinach and ricotta mixture.
 - 4 Divide the spinach and ricotta mixture between the pancakes then roll up and place side by side in a baking dish. Pour the passata on top, scatter with the reserved hard Italian cheese and bake in the oven for 20 minutes until bubbling.
- PER SERVING: 291 CALS, 6.3G FAT

Friday

CHUNKY CHILLI BEAN SOUP



Serves 6
Ready in 30 mins

1 onion, chopped
1.2 lt (2 pints) vegetable stock
3 celery sticks, diced
1 red pepper, deseeded and diced
1 yellow pepper, deseeded and diced
2 tsp ground cumin
a pinch of dried chilli flakes
2 tbsp tomato purée
400g can chopped tomatoes
410g can kidney beans
200g can sweetcorn, drained

MASTERCLASS PERFECT PANCAKES

Makes 8 pancakes
Ready in 20 mins

100g plain flour
a pinch of salt
1 free-range egg
200ml skimmed milk mixed with 5
tbsp cold water
calorie-controlled cooking spray

- 1 Sift the flour and salt into a mixing bowl. Make a well in the centre and add the egg. Pour in a little of the milk-water mixture and begin to stir, gradually drawing in the flour as you go. Add the rest of the milk-water mixture, a bit at a time, stirring until you have a smooth batter. Pour into a jug. This will make it easier to pour the batter into the frying pan.
- 2 To make the pancakes, heat a 18cm (7 in) non-stick frying pan (omelette size) over a medium heat. Lightly spray with the cooking spray and then pour in enough batter to coat the base of the pan. Tilt the pan to spread the batter around evenly. Cook for about one minute until the underside of the pancake is set and golden brown. Slide a non-stick turner or wooden spatula under the pancake and flip it over. Cook the second side for about 30 seconds, or until spotted with brown.
- 3 Slide out on to a plate, and cook the rest of the batter in the same way to make a total of eight pancakes, spraying the pan with a little more cooking spray before you make each one. Place a strip of baking parchment between each pancake on the plate to keep them separate. Cover with a clean tea towel to keep warm.

juice 1/2 a lime
3 tbsp chopped fresh coriander

- 1 Place the onion in a large lidded saucepan with 100ml of the stock. Cover and cook for three minutes then add the celery and peppers. Cover again and cook for a further five minutes.
 - 2 Add the cumin, chilli flakes and tomato puree and cook for one minute, stirring, to bring out the flavour, before adding the chopped tomatoes and the rest of the stock. Bring back to the boil and simmer for 10 minutes.
 - 3 Add the kidney beans and sweetcorn to the soup and simmer for five minutes. Mix in the lime juice and serve the soup scattered with the coriander.
- PER SERVING: 116 CALS, 1.4G FAT

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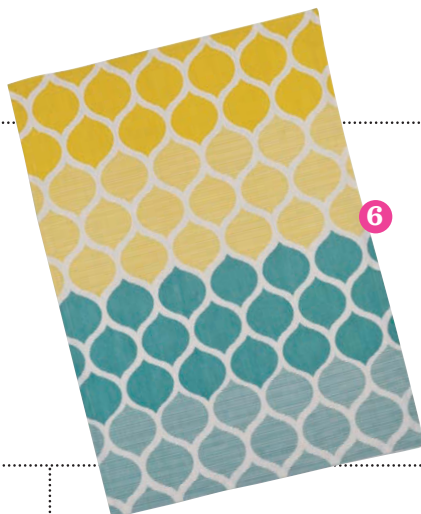
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5 VEGETARIAN MYTHS

Channel 4's Dr Christian Jessen debunks five fictions about a meat-free diet

1

MYTH: "VEGGIES DON'T GET ENOUGH PROTEIN!"

Because vegetarians do not eat meat they are obviously missing one dietary source of protein. But, with careful attention to their vegetarian diets including as much variety as possible, they should easily be able to meet their recommended daily allowance of protein. Good sources include beans, pulses, lentils and nuts, like pistachios. Eggs are also a great way to get protein into your diet.

2

MYTH: "ALL VEGETARIANS ARE ANAEMIC"

Anaemia can be an issue for all of us, especially women, who lose a small amount of iron every month during their period. Haem iron from animal sources is well absorbed by our bodies but non-haem sources from plants probably account for the main source of dietary iron for most people. However, in certain circumstances it is less well absorbed and you'll need to eat the right amount to meet your RDA of iron. Good vegetarian sources of iron include beans, dark green leafy vegetables, lentils, chickpeas and tofu. Many foods are fortified with B vitamins and iron, including bread and cereals. Non-haem iron absorption is enhanced if eaten with a source of vitamin C, so a glass of orange juice with your breakfast cereal is ideal.

3

MYTH: "IF YOU GO VEGETARIAN, YOU'LL LOSE WEIGHT"

Three out of the eight participants on my recent weight loss show, *Weighing Up The Enemy*, were vegan yet obese, showing that actually with a poor diet it is very easy for vegetarians to put on weight. Eating only cake and crisps would classify you as a vegetarian but this clearly has no health benefits and a high likelihood of putting on weight. A healthy vegetarian diet is all about balance with plenty of fruit and veg, starchy foods, some non-dairy source of protein like eggs and beans, some dairy products and just a small amount of fatty and sugary foods.

4

MYTH: "YOU CAN'T FIND OMEGAS ANYWHERE OTHER THAN FISH"

There are plenty of non-fish sources of omega 3, including flaxseeds and flaxseed oil, walnuts, soya beans and tofu, Brussels sprouts and cauliflower.

MYTH: "YOU WON'T GET ENOUGH VITAMIN B12 IN YOUR DIET"

It's essential that all vegetarians realise that vitamin B12 is only found in animal products so it is important to include eggs regularly in your diet. Other sources, although these are less good, are yeast extracts and fortified breakfast cereals. But if you really feel you're not getting enough, you can take a vitamin B12 supplement. (By the way, there is no maximum requirement of eggs and they do not raise cholesterol levels!)

Dr Christian Jessen is the charismatic presenter of *Embarrassing Illnesses*, *Supersize Vs Superskinny*, the BAFTA award-winning *Embarrassing Bodies* and *The Ugly Face of Beauty*. He graduated in 2000 from University College London, having trained in general medicine, infectious disease, travel medicine and sexual health/HIV. He has lived in Kenya and Uganda where he taught in schools while researching malaria and HIV interactions in children. He now works at Doctorcall on Harley Street, looking after general medical and sexual health patients.

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“The seasons are
at the heart of my
cooking”

After striking up a fruitful relationship with an unlikely partner, **Raymond Blanc** is proving himself to be much more than a chef



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COVER RECIPE
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SPRING PEA
RISOTTO

There are few people as passionate about food as Michelin-star chef Raymond Blanc. And while most chefs see their precious creations from the point of sourcing their own producers, to the final smear of jus, Blanc has taken that perfectionism one step further. He has teamed up with the famous Kew Gardens to turn a corner of the historic 300-acre site into a bountiful walled kitchen garden. The Royal botanical gardens has not been used like this since the Georgian times, and has now been planted with dozens of heritage varieties of fruit and vegetables, each with its own unique history.



But why swap his whites for garden gloves? “I grew up in a family that really respected cooking and growing food,” he explains. “We had a huge garden and my sisters and I would often be planting or harvesting in the freezing cold while my friends were out playing football. And, after all these years, I still absolutely love my gardens. I am still in awe of their mysteries and complexities.

“I marvel at the life cycle of a seed as it grows and responds to the iciness of winter and the heat of the sun; and the extraordinary rhythms of the season, which mirrors and defines our own lives. That has always been at the heart of my cooking.”

Seasons greetings

Even his double Michelin-starred restaurant is named after the seasons – Le Manoir aux Quat’Saisons – and he was one of the first to create an entirely vegetable-based menu. “About 20 years ago, I introduced a full vegetarian menu and was laughed at. Chefs back then were a carnivorous bunch, and they used to think that meat-free dishes lacked creativity. This is obviously not the case! Vegetables and gardening is at the core of my cooking. At least I know that I didn’t just jump on that bandwagon...”

So, what has it been like for the Frenchman to work on the most famous British allotment? “It’s pretty funny that a French Republican is now growing produce on a former royal plot,” he chuckles. “But I’m extremely proud of the Kew Gardens project. We have grown around 250 varieties of fruit and vegetables that will be used as a reference point for years to come. And the soil at the gardens is like nothing I’ve come across before – it took five years to perfect, and the rich fertile earth this has created has been well worth the wait. We grew the most extraordinary strawberries; they were so plump and flavoursome.”

And this ritzy produce has inspired plenty of new dishes too. Raymond has just published the *Kew on a Plate* cookbook, which is packed full of plot-to-plate ideas, from smoked garlic focaccia to a spring pea risotto where not even the pea pods are discarded. Pick up a pack of heritage seeds for your garden today, or try Raymond’s delicious recipes that make the most of British-grown produce.

SPRING PEA RISOTTO



Serves 4-6

Ready in 50 mins

For the pea stock (makes 600ml)

350g fresh pea pods, shelled (use the shells for the stock and the peas for the purée and vegetables)
350ml iced water

For the pea purée

100g fresh peas (shelled weight)
10g unsalted butter
pinch of sea salt

For the risotto

1/2 white onion, diced
2 tbsp refined olive oil
1 small garlic clove, finely grated
200g carnaroli rice
100ml vegetarian white wine, plus extra to finish (optional)
40g freshly grated vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese
sea salt and ground black pepper

For the vegetables

5g unsalted butter
120g baby courgettes, cut into slices
140g fresh peas (podded weight)
40g French breakfast radishes, sliced
40g radish tops
40g baby leaf spinach

To finish

juice of 1/4 lemon
50ml extra virgin olive oil

To garnish (optional)

15g pea shoots, quickly blanched
20g veggie Parmesan-style shavings

1 Make the pea stock: In a large pan of simmering water, blanch the pea pod shells for one minute. Using a slotted spoon, remove the shells and refresh them in the iced water. Once cooled, blitz the iced water and blanched pea pods in a food processor until smooth. Strain through a sieve and set aside 100ml to make the pea purée and the remaining 500ml to make the risotto.

2 Next, make the pea purée: In a small saucepan on a medium heat,

sweat the peas in the butter for five minutes, adding a pinch of salt. Add the 100ml of reserved pea stock, bring to a boil and simmer for four minutes. Transfer to a food processor and blend.

3 For the risotto, in a medium saucepan on a low heat, sweat the onion in the olive oil with a pinch of salt for two minutes, until translucent. Add the garlic. Stir in the rice and continue to cook on a low heat for three minutes, until the grains of rice appear shiny. Pour in the wine, then the 500ml of reserved pea stock, stir and bring to the gentlest simmer. Season then cover with a lid and leave to cook very gently for 20 minutes.

4 After 20 minutes of cooking, check to see if the rice is cooked. Now you need to add the creaminess that we all love and that means five minutes of hard and fast stirring. Stir in 200ml of the cooled pea purée, which will revive the colour and add freshness. Stir in the Parmesan-style cheese, taste and correct the seasoning. Set aside.

5 Prepare the vegetables: In a small saucepan on a high heat, bring the butter, 50ml water and a pinch of salt to the boil. Add the courgettes, cover with a lid and cook on a high heat for 30 seconds, then add the peas, radishes, radish tops and spinach, cover and continue for 20 seconds.

6 To finish the risotto, stir in the lemon juice, olive oil and maybe a dash of white wine to sharpen the flavour.

PER SERVING (6 SERVINGS): 387 CALS, 20.5G FAT

BRUNO LOUBET'S BEAN AND VEGETABLE CHILLI



Serves 6-8

Ready in 50 mins

For the toasted spices

1 1/2 tsp ground coriander
1 1/2 tsp ground cumin
2 tsp sweet smoked paprika



For the vegetable base

1/2 onion, cut into chunks
3 garlic cloves, crushed
125g celery, diced
70g fennel, diced
1 large carrot, peeled and diced
375g button mushrooms
1 red chilli
12g ginger, peeled and finely grated
1 red pepper, cut into large dice

To cook the chilli

100ml rapeseed oil
large pinch of sea salt

For the flageolet beans

550ml water
100g flageolet beans

To finish the chilli

100g tomato purée
200g piquillo peppers
1 x 400g tin chopped tomatoes
1 x 240g tin red kidney beans
100g brown sauce
2 tbsp vegetarian Worcestershire sauce

For the rice

260g brown basmati rice
1 bay leaf

To finish

40g chocolate (100 per cent cocoa solids), finely grated
10g coriander leaves, roughly chopped



1 Toast the spices in a dry frying pan on a low-medium heat for one minute.

2 For the vegetable base, place the onion, garlic, celery, fennel, carrot, mushrooms, chilli, ginger and red pepper in a food processor and pulse in 3-second bursts for 30 seconds, until you have 2-3mm dice.

3 To cook the chilli, in a large pan on a medium heat, sweat the vegetable base in the oil with the spices and a pinch of salt for 10 minutes.

4 For the flageolet beans, in a separate large saucepan on a high heat, boil the flageolet beans for 10 minutes, until just tender. Lift the beans from the pan with a slotted spoon but keep the cooking liquor on the heat.

5 To finish the chilli, add the tomato purée, piquillo peppers and tinned tomatoes and simmer for 10 minutes. add the kidney beans, cooked flageolet beans, brown and vegetarian Worcestershire sauces and leave to cook for a further five minutes.

6 While the chilli is cooking, cook the brown rice in the bean cooking liquor with the bay leaf and simmer, covered, for 15-20 minutes. Once cooked, drain.

7 To finish, stir in the chocolate and garnish with coriander.

PER SERVING: 363 CALS, 16.9G FAT

SMOKED GARLIC FOCACCIA



Makes 2 loaves

Ready in 25 mins, plus proving

For the dough

unsalted butter, for greasing
500g strong white organic bread flour, plus a little extra for dusting
4 tsp sea salt
2 rosemary sprigs, finely chopped
10 smoked garlic cloves, chopped
15g fresh yeast
280ml water
6-7 tbsp good-quality olive oil

CHEF'S NOTE

I developed this technique of cooking a risotto as a means of saving time. I hated watching my chefs spend so long stirring the rice. My method requires less time and effort but every grain of rice is perfectly cooked. Those last five minutes are crucial. By stirring you work the starch and extract it, which is what gives the risotto its hallmark creaminess



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add the yeast mixture, half the oil and gradually mix together with your fingertips. Once the dough comes together, start to knead on a lightly floured work surface for 3-4 minutes. This will work the gluten and give the bread dough its strength and structure. Add the remaining oil whilst kneading and continue for a further 5-8 minutes. Place the dough back into the bowl, cover with a clean cloth and prove at room temperature for 30 minutes.

4 Divide the dough in half and roll each piece out to fit into one of the tins. Press the dough down with your fingertips to cover the base. Prove in a warm place (at 30C maximum), again covered with a clean cloth until it doubles in volume; this usually takes 30-40 minutes.

5 Preheat the oven to 270C/500F/ Gas 9. To bake, lightly brush the dough with a little olive oil and sprinkle the sea salt or other garnishes over the top. Bake in the oven for 12-15 minutes or until golden and crisp. Turn out of the tins to cool on a wire rack.

PER LOAF: 1,318 CALS, 56.76 FAT

**BROWN
BASMATI RICE
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FLAVOUR THAN
WHITE**

To bake

good-quality olive oil, for brushing
2 tsp sea salt

1 Lightly grease two round 20cmx3cm baking tins, then dust them with flour.

2 To prepare the dough, in a large mixing bowl, mix the flour, 2 tsp of the salt, the rosemary and garlic. In a separate bowl dissolve the yeast in the water.

3 Make a well in the middle of the flour,



BOOKSHELF

Recipes taken from *Kew on a Plate with Raymond Blanc** (£21, Headline). Photography by Jean Cazals.

*INCLUDES NON-VEGETARIAN CONTENT

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BRITISH ASPARAGUS TORTILLA



Serves 4

Ready in 25 mins

Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6. Place **1 bundle British asparagus** into boiling salted water, bring back to the boil and then cook for 2-3 minutes before plunging into ice water. In a non-stick ovenproof frying pan, fry **1 thinly sliced courgette** in **15g unsalted butter** before adding **2 crushed garlic cloves**. Cook over a medium heat for 6-7 minutes, until almost sticky. Parboil **200g peeled and diced Maris Piper potatoes**, then drain and add to the courgette pan along with **1 sliced red onion**. Cook until soft. Next, place the asparagus in the pan along with **6 medium free-range beaten eggs** that have been seasoned with **salt and pepper**. When the eggs have just set around the edges, transfer the pan to the oven and bake for 6-8 minutes. Once cooked, transfer to a plate and serve.

ASPARAGUS AND VEGETABLE STIR-FRY



Serves 2 as main or 4 as side

Ready in 15 mins

Cut **250g asparagus** into two inch pieces. Cut **100g mange tout** and **100g baby corn** in half lengthways then blanch all three of these vegetables in boiling water for 2 minutes, refresh with cold water and drain. Heat **3 tbsp oil** in a wok and stir-fry **1 red pepper** cut into strips, **1 chopped red chilli**, **2 chopped garlic cloves** and **1 inch chopped ginger**. Add **1 tbsp ketjap manis** or **soy sauce** and stir. Add asparagus, mange tout and corn and continue to fry for 2-3 minutes. To finish, add **2 tbsp chopped coriander** and **1 tbsp chopped basil**. Stir and serve at once with jasmine rice.

ASPARAGUS AND SPINACH SOUP



Serves 4

Ready in 30 mins

Remove the hard stems of **12 asparagus** (reserving 4 heads to garnish) and chop finely. Place a saucepan on the heat and add a little **olive oil** and **50g unsalted butter**. Add **1 medium diced white onion**, **1 crushed garlic clove** and heat for 5 minutes on a low heat. Add the asparagus, after another two minutes pour **800ml vegetable stock** in and bring to the boil then allow to simmer for 20 minutes. Add **100g spinach** and simmer for 2 minutes. Use a blender and blitz in batches until lump-free. Mix **crème fraîche** with **2 tbsp chopped chives** and season. Finally, pour the soup into a bowl, place a spoonful of crème fraîche on top and a head of asparagus on top of that.

WARM ASPARAGUS, ROCKET, PEA AND BEAN SALAD



Serves 4

Ready in 10 mins

Clean **450g British asparagus** then blanch with **175g shelled peas** and **175g shelled broad beans** in boiling water for 2 minutes. In a screw top jar, place **4 tbsp olive oil**, the **juice of ½ a lemon**, **1 tbsp wholegrain mustard**, **½ tsp honey** and **salt and pepper** then shake until combined. Drain the vegetables and toss in the dressing before serving on a bed of **rocket**.

BRITISH ASPARAGUS AND CHEESE MUFFINS



Makes 12 large muffins

Ready in 45 mins

Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6 and line a 12-hole muffin tin with cases. Cut **12 asparagus spears** into 1cm pieces and blanch in boiling water for 2 minutes. Drain and refresh in cold water before separating the tips and the stems. Cube **200g Joseph Heler Cheshire cheese** and mix in a large bowl with **400g self-raising flour**. Melt **125g butter**, pour into a jug and stir in **1 small bunch of chopped chives**, **150ml milk**, **100ml plain yoghurt**, **1 tsp English mustard** and **2 free-range eggs**. Mix well and season. Fold the wet ingredients into the flour and cheese, and stir in the asparagus stems. Spoon the mixture between the muffin cases and put an asparagus tip into the middle of each. Bake for 25-30 minutes until golden.

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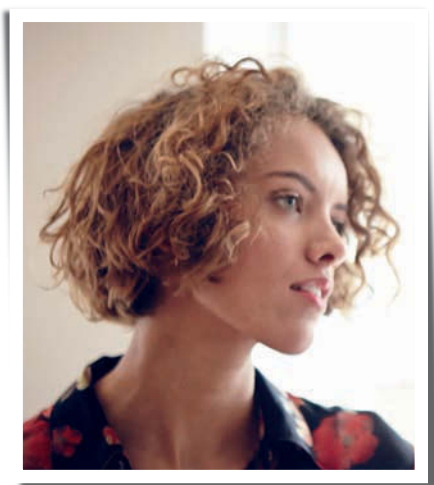


PHOTO BY NATO WELTON

Baking Perfection

WITH RUBY TANDOH

One of the most common baking questions we get from readers is how to know when their cake is cooked. It's an area where contestants on *The Great British Bake-off* often come unstuck, so we asked **Ruby Tandoh** for her expert advice...

Sliding a tin of cake batter into a hot oven and tenderly shutting the door, it's tempting to turn the kettle on, kick back and congratulate yourself on a job well done. But without wishing to scaremonger or to fuss: don't speak too soon. Far from being the closing credits in your cake's story, its time in the oven will prove pivotal: baked well, it'll rise to great heights; baked poorly, even the most fastidiously prepared cake batter will proceed to disappoint, emerging perhaps claggy, perhaps dry.

Cooking time and temperature are the important variables to consider at this point. Rapid, high-temperature cooking will set an airy sponge batter, whereas a deeper, heavier cake — perhaps a fruit cake, for instance — will be better suited to a longer, gentler stint in the oven. Oven temperatures can be checked by using a cheap oven thermometer. The bake time, however, is slightly more difficult to pin down. Variations in tin sizes and thicknesses, different ambient and ingredient temperatures and oven peculiarities can all have an impact on how long it takes a cake to cook. With this in mind, it's important to be able to look beyond the guide baking times and learn how to 'read' a cake, judging for yourself whether your creation is baked or not. If you can do

this — by ogling, prodding and stabbing your cake — you'll be able to scale up or down or swap tins with confidence, making these recipes your own. Here are a few tests, which will, I hope, make the baking process more intuitive and less fraught...

Knife-test

This is the most used test and the most effective. I always use a small knife for this, but you can use a proper caketester if you have one, or even a skewer or cocktail stick. If the cake is ready, a knife inserted into the middle of it will come out with no more than a couple of moist crumbs sticking to it. If the knife emerges coated with batter, the cake isn't yet done. This is the best way of being sure that the cake is cooked right

through. Just don't be overzealous: the knife needs to come out clean-ish, but if you wait until it comes out bone dry then you will have baked the cake too long.

Check the edges

Large cakes, particularly whisked ones such as genoise sponges, will pull away from the edges of the tin when ready. Look out for the rim of the cake just starting to peel back from the cake tin.

Spring-test

This test won't tell you definitively whether the cake is ready, but it will give you an indication. If, under the gentle press of a fingertip, the cake is left dented or feels fragile and spongy, it'll almost certainly need a while longer in the oven. If it's springy to the touch, it may well be ready, or very nearly there.

Colour confusion

Recipes will often specify that a cake ought to be 'golden brown' when done. This is fair enough as an observation, but a very inaccurate way of actually judging the cooking time in practice. The fundamental problem here is that most cakes will begin to take on a deeper hue long before their centre is cooked. The only time you need to heed the colour of your baking cake is if it's beginning to burn.



BANANA BREAD



Serves 8

Ready in 1 hr 20 mins

For the Cake

125g unsalted butter, soft
 110g agave nectar
 2 medium bananas, well mashed
 2 tbsp rum or brandy
 2 large free-range eggs
 190g plain flour
 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
 1/2 tsp cinnamon
 1/4 tsp salt
 4 cardamom pods, seeds only, crushed

For the glaze, if desired:

100g icing sugar
 25ml water

You'll also need: 900g loaf tin

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180C (fan 160C)/350F/Gas 4. Grease and line the loaf tin with baking parchment.
- 2 Cream the butter then stir in the agave nectar. Beat in the bananas and rum or brandy, then the eggs and a couple of tablespoons of the flour. Beat until smooth, but don't worry if it looks a little curdled at this stage. Combine the remaining flour with the baking powder, cinnamon, cardamom and salt in a separate bowl then add this to the wet mixture. Fold the ingredients together then stir lightly until fully combined.
- 3 Spoon the batter into the prepared tin and bake for 45-50 minutes, or until a knife inserted into the centre of the cake comes out clean. While the cake is in the oven, make the drizzle icing: add the water to the icing sugar, a teaspoonful at a time, until combined. Set aside.
- 4 Once the cake is done let it cool in its tin for five minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack set over a tray (to catch any drips of surplus icing). Spoon the icing over the top of the cake while it's still hot. It'll cover the top and run down the sides in thick rivulets, but will set to a cracked sugar crust as the cake cools.

PER SERVING: 338 CALS, 14.4G FAT

EASY BAKE FOR
SPRING

BOOKSHELF

Recipe taken from Ruby Tandoh's
*Crumb: The Baking Book** (£20,
 Chatto & Windus). Photography
 by Nato Weldon.

*INCLUDES NON-VEGETARIAN CONTENT

WITH THE *Grain*

Harness the power of cheap, filling and nutritious grains by making these mouth-watering recipes

AMARANTH-CRUSTED TOFU WITH GREEN BEANS AND BLACK RICE



Serves 4

Ready in 1 hr 5 mins

300g packet of black rice
400g extra firm tofu, drained
4 tbsp amaranth flour
3 tbsp sesame seeds, plus extra to serve
1 free-range egg, lightly beaten
salt and freshly ground black pepper
2-3 tbsp grapeseed oil
2 tbsp sesame oil, plus extra to serve
1 onion, thinly sliced
1 tsp grated fresh root ginger
3 mild red chillies, deseeded and sliced into 1cm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) pieces
3 garlic cloves, crushed and thinly sliced
200g green beans, blanched
1 tbsp tamari sauce, plus extra to serve
2 spring onions, cut into 2.5cm (1 in) long pieces

1 Place the rice in a large saucepan and cook according to packet instructions. Remove from the heat, cover, and set aside. Pat the tofu dry with kitchen paper and cut 16x2.5cm (1 in) thick triangles. Set aside.

2 Place the amaranth flour and sesame seeds in a shallow dish and mix to combine. Place the egg in a small bowl. Season the tofu with

salt and pepper and brush lightly with the egg. Then toss the tofu in the amaranth flour mixture until lightly coated.

3 Heat the grapeseed oil in a large frying pan over a medium-low heat. Once the oil has heated, reduce to low and add the tofu. Cook for 3-4 minutes on each side, turning the tofu gently to prevent it breaking apart, until evenly



Freekeh is a super-grain of toasted young wheat and is highly nutritious with a delicate smoky flavour and masses of health benefits, including four times the fibre of brown rice with a super low GI. It's easy to cook – use it in place of rice, pasta or other grains.

We use Artisan Grains' Greenwheat Freekeh, £1.79, Tesco.

CLEAN
FOOD

INCREDIBLE
FALAFEL!

browned on each side. Remove with a slotted spoon, set aside on a lined plate, and keep warm. Drain the excess oil from the pan.

4 Add the sesame oil to the pan and increase the heat to medium. Add the onions, ginger and chillies. Cook for about five minutes, stirring frequently, until softened. Then add the garlic and cook for another minute. Add the green beans and cook, stirring, for 3-4 minutes.

5 Add the tamari sauce and spring onions. Season with pepper and cook, stirring, for about three minutes. Add the tofu and gently heat through for two minutes. Do not stir the tofu as it may break apart. Remove from the heat. Divide the rice between four serving plates. Top with the green bean and onion stir-fry and the tofu. Sprinkle over sesame seeds, drizzle with some oil and tamari sauce, and serve warm.

PER SERVING: 530 CALS, 29.5G FAT

“The addition of quinoa to the traditional falafel gives them an added wholegrain goodness and a unique flavour and texture”

QUINOA FALAFEL WITH MINT YOGHURT SAUCE



Serves 4

Ready in 1 hr, plus chilling

60g uncooked quinoa
1 free-range egg
2 garlic cloves
1 tbsp cumin
¼ tsp salt
2 x 400g can chickpeas, drained
4 tbsp chopped coriander leaves

1 tbsp plain flour, for dusting
1-2 tbsp olive oil

For the sauce

150g Greek yoghurt
4 tbsp chopped mint leaves
juice of 1 lemon

1 Rinse the quinoa, place in a large saucepan, and cover with 170ml of water. Place the pan over a medium heat and bring to a simmer. Cook the quinoa until almost all the water has been absorbed. Remove from the heat and drain.

2 Place the quinoa, egg, garlic, cumin, salt, and 350g of the chickpeas in a food processor. Pulse until well

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WHY NOT TRY?

...using 2 large sweet potatoes in place of the squash, and cook in the same way. You can also use chicory or rocket instead of the radicchio.

GRAIN EXCHANGE

THIS DISH WOULD
WORK JUST AS WELL
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OR FARRO. JUST ADJUST
THE COOKING TIMES
ACCORDING TO
THE PACKET.

combined. Add the coriander and the remaining chickpeas and pulse until the chickpeas have broken but still retain their texture. Transfer the mixture to a bowl and chill.

3 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/ Gas 6. Grease and line a baking sheet with greaseproof paper. Divide the falafel mixture into eight equal portions. On a lightly floured surface, roll each portion into a smooth ball and press down lightly to form patty-like shapes.

4 Brush the falafel with a oil, place on the baking sheet and bake for about 20 minutes.

5 For the sauce, place all the ingredients in a bowl and mix.

PER SERVING: 334 CALS, 16.16 FAT

FREEKAH SWEET AND SPICY WARM SALAD



Serves 4

Ready in 55 mins, plus cooling

2 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp grated ginger
1 tsp ground cumin
2 tbsp light olive oil
1 butternut squash, deseeded and cut
into 2cm cubes
200g cracked freekeh
1 small head radicchio,
roughly chopped
8 dried pitted dates, roughly chopped
4 tbsp roughly chopped flat-leaf
parsley

For the dressing

4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
juice of 1 lemon
1 tbsp honey
salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/ Gas 6. Combine the cinnamon, ginger, cumin, and oil in a small bowl. Place the butternut squash in a baking tray, pour the mixture over, and toss to coat. Bake in the oven for 30-35 minutes.

2 Meanwhile, rinse the freekeh under running water and place in a large

saucepan. Cover with 1 litre of water and bring to the boil. Then reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 15 minutes or until all the water has been absorbed. Remove from the heat, drain any remaining water, and leave to cool.

3 For the dressing, place all the ingredients in a bowl. Season to taste and mix to combine. Place the radicchio and dates in a large serving dish. Add the squash and freekeh and toss lightly to mix. Then pour over the dressing, season to taste, and toss until well combined. Serve warm garnished with parsley.

PER SERVING: 460 CALS, 22.7G FAT

BOOKSHELF



**Recipes taken
from *Grains as
Mains** by
Laura Agar
Wilson (£16.99,
DK, £16.99).**

Also available as an eBook.

*INCLUDES NON-VEGETARIAN CONTENT



RICHARDSON ET AL. PLOS ONE 2017;19(1):E43909. DOI: 10.1371/JOURNAL.PONE.0163909

RICHARDSON ET AL. PLOS ONE 2017;19(1):E43909. DOI: 10.1371/JOURNAL.PONE.0163909

OMEGA-3: THE LOWDOWN

There are some nutrients that vegetarians need to ensure they get enough of, so we caught up with supplement experts **Efamol** to find out more about omega-3

Q. What is omega-3?

Omega-3s are essential fatty acids or EFAs. EFAs are important for ensuring the maintenance of normal brain and eye function. If we don't have the right level of EFAs, our brains won't function normally. Omega-6s are another type of EFA – found in vegetable oils, grains, seeds and nuts.

Q. Why is it so important to my health?

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) recently did a review of the benefits for all of the different dietary supplements available on the market and, out of all of these, omega-3 fats were recognised as one of the most beneficial nutrients to health, with a host of claims approved, including brain, eye and heart health claims.

This is due in part to the wealth of science conducted on these fats, with over 21,000 published trials conducted to date. What's more, Efamol pride themselves on being the most clinically substantiated brand, with numerous trials conducted using its unique omega-3 formulations.

Q. What are the best sources of omega-3?

The most well known dietary sources of EPA and DHA is cold water oily fish. Think salmon, herring, anchovies, mackerel and sardines.



Q. So what can us veggies do?

These fish get their omega-3 from the purest source – algae. Unfortunately, with more and more people understanding the importance of taking omega-3s there has been an increase in unsustainable fishing methods.

Countless species of fish are now under threat, causing damage to marine ecosystems. But Efamol's EnvirOmega is both sustainable and renewable as the company uses algae.

Q. Why should I choose Efamol's Brain EnvirOmega?

For over 35 years Efamol Ltd have led the international field in scientific research and

development of essential fatty acid (EFA) health supplements. Even their name demonstrates their commitment – 'Efamol' is an acronym for Essential Fatty Acid MOLEcule.

Efamol's Brain EnvirOmega is a taste-free supplement that is good for you whilst being kind to the environment. It is also endorsed by the Vegetarian Society, and contains 125mg of DHA and 60mg of EPA from pure Algal Oil, so is a high strength formula. Each capsule also contains 5mg of Vitamin E which contributes to the protection of cells from oxidative stress.



Efamol Brain EnvirOmega is suitable for both adults and children over the ages of 3 and is available online at

www.efamol.com, in most Boots stores and Boots online. Priced at just £11.99 for 60 capsules EnvirOmega contains no yeast, no gluten or gluten derivatives and no artificial flavours, colours or preservatives.



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mmm... goats' butter!



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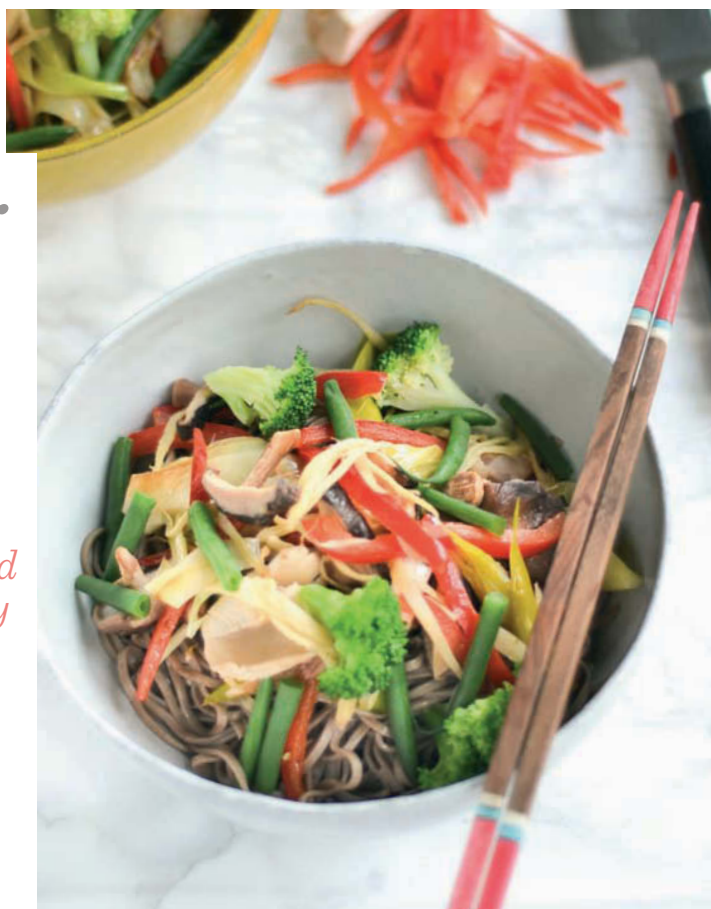


Chef says...

"I call mustard powder a 'disguiser'. I use a little to mask the taste of oat cream or sunflower spread in a savoury sauce and to ape the savoury bite of mature Cheddar or Parmesan."

Katy Salter,
AUTHOR OF *DAIRY-FREE DELICIOUS**
(QUADRILLE, £18.99). (INCLUDES NON-
VEGETARIAN CONTENT.)

Butters your tastebuds will love and a super-nourishing noodle dish



VEGETABLE STIR-FRIED SOBA NOODLES



Serves 4

Ready in 20 minutes

- * 400g dried soba noodles
- * 1 red pepper * 200g water chestnuts, sliced into 3mm thick pieces * $\frac{1}{4}$ head broccoli, blanched * 50g green beans, cut into thirds * 2 x 2cm peeled ginger * 1 leek * 4-5 dried shiitake mushroom * sesame oil * vegetable oil, for frying * sesame seeds

For the sauce

- * 60ml shiitake mushroom dashi * 40ml soy sauce * 1 tbsp sake * $\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp mirin

- 1 First make the stock. Add dried shiitake mushrooms to hot water for 10 minutes. Squeeze them out and remove them from the stock.
- 2 Follow packet instructions to cook the noodles. Then drain and rinse with cold water.
- 3 For the sauce, put dashi stock, soy sauce, sake and mirin in a small bowl and mix well.
- 4 Using a Santoku knife, slice the red pepper, leek and ginger. Cut the broccoli and green beans to bite-sized pieces and blanch them.
- 5 In a heavy-based frying pan over a medium heat, add the oil and then the ginger and leek first release the aromas. Then add the red pepper and the rest of the vegetables until they are cooked, stirring occasionally for a couple minutes. Add the noodles and keep stirring for a minute, pour the sauce over and reduce quickly. Garnish with sesame seeds and serve.

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The vegetable and coconut spread **Koko Dairy Free**, £1.95, contains half the fat of butter and is a great vegan spread. It's delicious on crumpets! Available from Waitrose and Healthfood stores.

the CURRY CLUB

In the first of a new series, **Madhur Jaffrey** shows us how to perfect the pinnacle of vegetarian curries – the lentil dal

“Pronounced ‘daal’ (with a soft Spanish ‘d’), the word ‘dal’ in India stands for the whole family of dried beans, pulses, legumes and split peas. Indian grocers generally have a large section devoted just to dals. This includes various versions of the same dal – whole with skin, whole without skin, split with skin, split without skin, as well as dal flours and combinations of dal flours for specific dishes.



“In China and much of the Far East, only the soya bean and, to a much lesser extent, the mung bean, have been explored to reveal the bounty they can offer. It is only India that has taken almost every legume it grows (other than the soya bean), and that it has received in the past from other continents, and revealed all their potential.

“Dals are a very important part of every Indian’s food world. For Indian vegetarians this is doubly true, as all legumes are a major source of protein. Each dal has its own taste and texture. For variety, not only can different dals be cooked every day, but the seasonings can be varied, as can the vegetables the dal is cooked with. Dals may also be combined in various ways not only for the somewhat soupy or porridge-like dishes we eat with our rice and breads, but to make savoury cakes, pancakes, pastas, snacks, starters, dry chutneys and sweet desserts. Chickpea flour alone can account for foods in all these categories. Indians are hard put to understand why the Americas, which grow so many wonderful varieties of legumes do so little with them, other than boiling them up whole.

Regional delicacies

“There are further minute distinctions in the dal dishes cooked in various parts of India. For example, in south India an ‘usali’ is a somewhat dry combination of a dal and a vegetable, a ‘kootu’ is a slightly wetter combination, and a ‘sambar’ a very soupy one. In the north you could have a very rich creamy dish of the black whole urad dal one day, the very light moong dal with crisply browned onions the next, and a dish of sprouted mung beans on the third day. Eating dal every day is never boring for an Indian.”

GREEN LENTIL CURRY WITH KALE



Serves 4-6

Ready in 45 mins

250g green lentils
 1/4 tsp ground turmeric
 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
 115g green beans cut into 2cm segments
 85g kale, veins removed, finely chopped
 3 tbsp finely chopped fresh coriander
 1 medium carrot, cut into 1/2cm rounds
 1 1/4 tsp salt

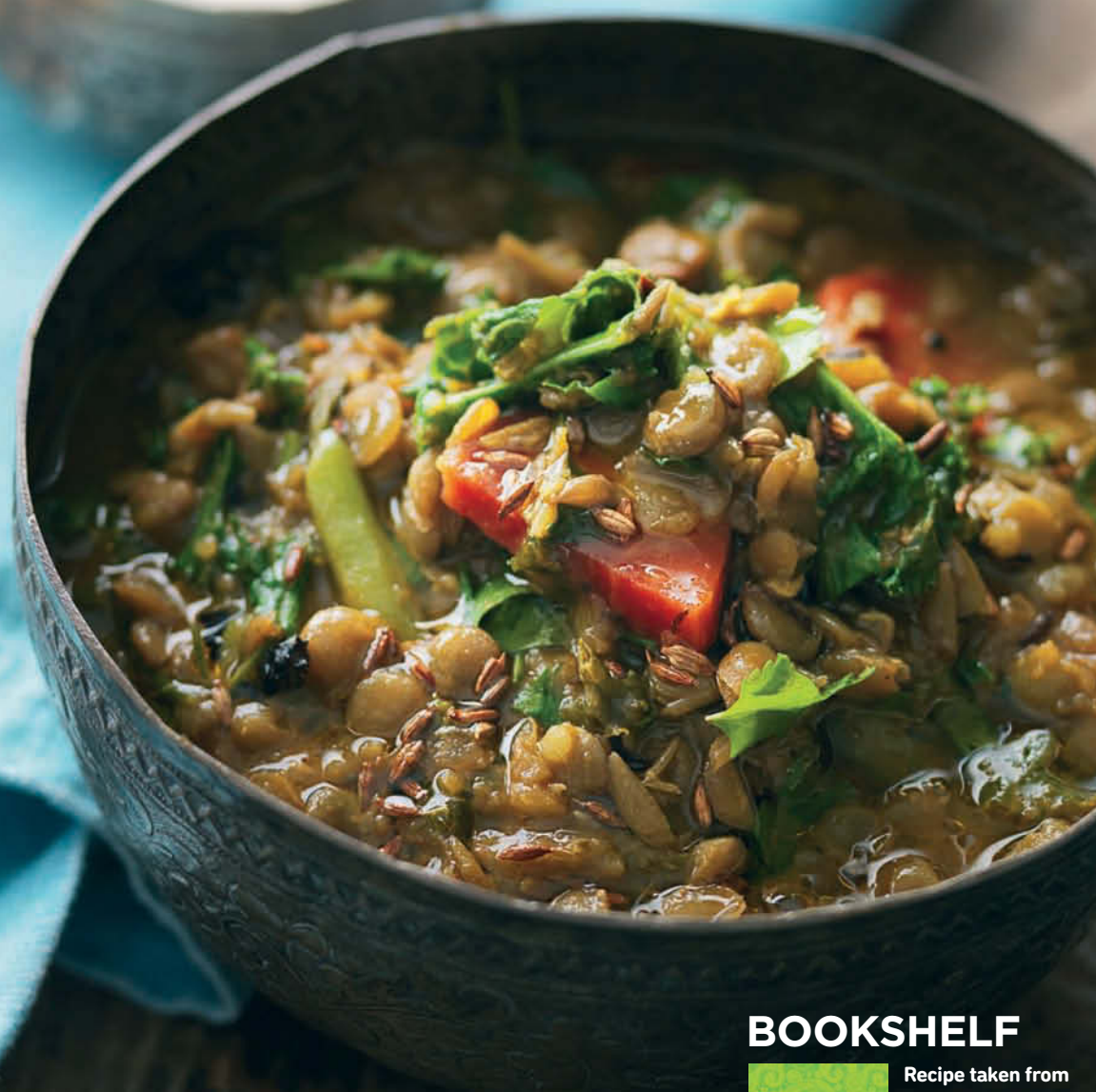
For the curry paste

1 tsp peeled and finely grated ginger
 1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed
 1 tsp ground cumin seeds
 2 tsp ground coriander seeds
 3 tbsp olive or rapeseed oil
 1/4 tsp whole cumin seeds
 1 tbsp peeled and finely chopped shallot
 2 tbsp tomato passata

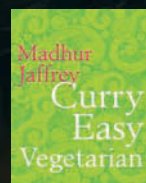
1 Put the lentils, turmeric and 1.2 lt water into a medium pan and bring to the boil. Cover partially and simmer gently for 20 minutes. Add the cayenne, beans, kale, coriander, carrot and salt. Stir and bring to the boil again. Cover partially and cook gently for 20 minutes.
2 Meanwhile, make the curry paste: combine the ginger, garlic, ground cumin and coriander. Mix in 50ml water.
3 Pour the oil into a medium frying pan and set over a medium-high heat. Add the whole cumin seeds. Let them sizzle for five seconds, then add the shallot. Fry until lightly browned. Add the spice paste and fry until you can see the oil along the edges, about 1 1/2 minutes. Add the passata and fry for another minute.
4 When the lentils have finished cooking, stir in the contents of the frying pan.

PER SERVING (4 SERVINGS): 309 CALS, 12.3G FAT

“This is almost a meal in itself,
nutritionally complete if you add
some wholemeal pitta (or rice)
and yoghurt on the side”



BOOKSHELF



Recipe taken from
Madhur Jaffrey's
*Curry Easy
Vegetarian* (£26,
Ebury).
Photography by
Jonathan Gregson

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VEGAN TREATS

Who said vegan food has to be virtuous? Loosen up in the kitchen with these indulgent recipes from street food pioneers **David and Charlotte Bailey**





BEER-BATTERED TOFU 'FISH' AND CHIPS WITH MUSHY PEAS



Serves 2

Ready in 40 mins

180g flour
1 tsp cornflour, plus extra to dust
1½ tsp onion powder
½ tsp garlic powder
1 tsp chilli powder
325ml vegan pale ale
350g block fresh firm tofu, drained and cut into 8-10 slices
1 sheet nori, cut into pieces to match the tofu slices

salt and pepper
1 lemon, cut into wedges to serve
tartare sauce, to serve

For the chips

4-5 King Edward potatoes, peeled, cut into chunky chip shapes and left to dry on a tea towel
750ml vegetable oil

For the mushy peas

200g fresh or frozen peas
1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
a handful of fresh mint, finely chopped

1 To make the chips, heat the oil to 160C/320F. When a cube of bread browns in about 40 seconds, put half the chips in, and fry for about 10 minutes. Keep the temperature constant. Remove with a slotted spoon

and leave to drain on a baking sheet covered with kitchen paper.

2 While the chips are draining, make the beer batter by combining the flour, cornflour, onion, garlic and chilli powders with the ale, mixing thoroughly. In a pan, heat the oil to 170C/340F. Check the temperature by putting a couple of drops of batter in the oil and seeing if it crisps up.

3 Dust the tofu and nori slices with a little cornflour, then coat with the batter mixture and add to the hot oil in batches. They should take about 3-4 minutes to get really crisp. Flip them over midway so that they get nice and golden on both sides. Remove with a slotted spoon, place on some kitchen paper to soak up any excess oil and season to taste.

4 When you're ready to eat, heat the oil to 190C/375F, put the chips back in and cook until they're golden and crispy. This should take about six minutes. Meanwhile, put the peas in boiling water with a little salt, bring to the boil, then cook for a couple of minutes until they're slightly overdone. Strain, put them back in the pan, then crush with a potato masher, adding a little water if necessary to make them soft. Add the apple cider vinegar and chopped mint. Season with salt and pepper and slowly heat while mixing for a couple of minutes.

5 Put everything together on a (big!) plate with a generous wedge of lemon and a dollop of tartare sauce and enjoy.

PER SERVING: 1,540 CALS, 59.3 G FAT

FARINATA



Serves 4

Ready in 40 mins

For the farinata batter

325ml water
175ml extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for cooking
125g chickpea flour
3 tbsp chopped fresh rosemary leaves
salt and pepper

For the filling

2 tbsp olive oil, plus a little extra for the tomatoes
½ onion, finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

“Made with chickpea flour and olive oil, these traditional Italian pancakes are wonderful for vegans who follow a wheat-free diet”



**WE LOVE
VEGAN FLAVOURING**

A dessert flavoured with one of the vegan Foodie Flavours natural flavouring makes a great way to finish off your indulgent vegan dinner. Our favourite is the Caramel, Chocolate and Dulce de Leche retail from £4.95 at www.foodieflavours.com, or ask you local baking ingredients retailer.



**GREAT
PARTY BITES**

150g wild mushrooms, sliced
150g button mushrooms, sliced
salt and pepper
½ bunch of fresh flat-leaf parsley,
chopped, plus extra to garnish

To serve

250g cherry tomatoes on the vine
olive oil
4 handfuls of rocket
1 tsp smoked paprika
aioli

1 Put all the batter ingredients in a blender and combine for about 30 seconds on fast until smooth. Set aside to rest for about 30 minutes.

2 To make the filling, heat the olive oil in a pan, then add the onion and garlic and sauté for a couple of minutes on a high heat. Add the mushrooms and seasoning and continue to sauté for a further 4-5 minutes. Finish off with the chopped parsley and set aside.

3 Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6. Put the cherry

tomatoes on a baking sheet with a drizzle of olive oil and some salt and pepper and roast for about 10 minutes.

4 Heat a little olive oil in a frying pan over a medium heat. Pour one-quarter of the batter into the pan and swirl round to cover the base. Fry for a few minutes until golden, then flip over and fry the other side. Remove from the pan and keep warm while you repeat with the remaining batter.

5 Place the farinata on individual plates, spoon the mushroom filling on top, then fold over to cover. Sprinkle with a little paprika. Serve with the roasted tomatoes, some rocket and a spoonful of aioli.

PER SERVING: 764 CALS, 69.6 G FAT

CHURROS WITH DARK CHOCOLATE DIPPING SAUCE



Ready in 20 mins

For the sugar dip

150g brown sugar
a pinch of salt
1 heaped tbsp ground cinnamon

For the churros

250ml water
a pinch of salt
2½ tbsp sugar
60ml vegetable oil, plus an extra
400ml for frying
1 tsp vanilla extract
110g plain flour

For the sauce

100g dark chocolate (make sure it's
vegan and has a high cacao content)

1 First, make the dip. Mix together the sugar, salt and cinnamon in a bowl. Set aside.

2 Next, make the churros dough. In a pan, bring the water to the boil before adding the salt and sugar. Once they've dissolved, turn off the heat and add the oil and vanilla extract. Add the flour and mix thoroughly until all the ingredients are well combined. Transfer to a piping bag and set aside.

3 To make the sauce use a bain marie (or put a glass bowl over a pot of simmering water). Add the chocolate and heat until melted.

4 Heat the 400ml oil in a pan until it reaches about 190C/375F, when a cube of bread browns in 60 seconds. Pipe in some long strands of the churros dough (you should be able to do about four at a time) and move them around so that they cook evenly. Remove when crispy and golden using a slotted spoon and roll in the sugar dip. Monitor the heat as you cook the remaining batches, keeping the cooked churros warm until you have used up all the dough.

5 Serve the churros hot with the chocolate dipping sauce.

PER SERVING: 539 CALS, 22.7 G FAT

BOOKSHELF

Recipes taken from *The Fresh Vegan Kitchen* by David and Charlotte Bailey (£16.99, Pavilion)



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In Our Basket

Keep your shopping trolley crammed full of interesting goodies with editorial assistant **James Fell's** exciting roundup of veggie buys



VOYA Seaweed Soap, £11, www.voya.ie
This invigorating spearmint and rosemary seaweed soap leaves your skin feeling completely refreshed

Mokhado Avocado Oil, £6.99, www.mokhado.com
One of the most adored fruits on the planet makes for an incredibly versatile oil with a smooth yet subtly grassy flavour



Groovy Food Marinades, £2.50, www.groovyfood.co.uk
Awaken your taste buds with this fantastic range of marinades – opt for the delicious Agave Nectar for a sweet glaze and very few calories!



Jamie Oliver Ready to Eat Pouches, £2.29, Sainsbury's
The Bulgur Wheat with Apricot, Lemon & Chilli is perfect for a quick and hearty office lunch!



Dream Ice Cream, £4.99, Waitrose
This dairy-free ice cream delivers on taste and indulgence with a gloriously rich and creamy texture, and makes for the perfect evening treat!



La Maison Maille Spring Summer Collection, £25, www.maille.com
Inspired by the current renaissance of the Parisian Bistro, Maille has created three chic and creative mustard flavours using high-quality seasonal ingredients

Vbites Range, From £2.49, www.vbitesfoods.com
If you ever find yourself with the meat-cravings, you can't beat Vbites' range of meat-free alternatives



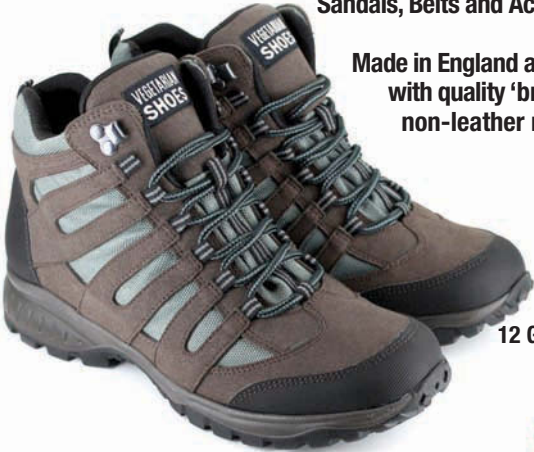
OMFG Sausages, £3.79, Holland & Barrett
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AMAZING GRACE!

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JANEY LEE GRACE'S
PLANET-SAVING ADVICE

"Most of us don't use plastic bags these days, and it's a good thing too as research suggests that after five years you could have used over 1,000! Here's what to do with your drawer of bags:

- They make great doggy dropping bags and disposable nappy sacks.
- Fill with shredded paper to create reusable packing materials.
- Use over jumpers to protect clothes from moths



Green fingers

May is the month to start your kitchen garden; squash, broad beans and cucumber seeds can all be sown now. And if you're going to get handy in the garden the Snip and Twine Gardeners Gift Set, £18, is a pretty incentive to start digging. Visit www.rowenandwren.co.uk

3 OF THE BEST...

Vegan shoes



LAIID-BACK STYLE

Santorini Sandal, £44.95,
www.vegetarian-shoes.co.uk



WORK WEAR WARDROBE

Ladies Brogue Shoe, £82.95,
www.ethicalwares.com



FOR A NIGHT OUT

Rebel Vegan Bethan Sandal, £27,
www.fashion-conscience.com

Soft touch

Who doesn't love a pretty cushion?

They're such a simple way to update your interiors and make a nod to a new trend without having to redecorate the whole house. This beautifully intricate Bangla Embroidered Cushion, £12.50, from ethical retailer Natural Collection goes well with textured greys or a deep purple colour scheme and looks more expensive than it's reasonable price tag. For more information, visit www.naturalcollection.com



Ask ROSE

Advice you can rely on from vegetarian food writer **Rose Elliot**



Q SPIRALIZERS SEEM TO BE EVERYWHERE AT THE MOMENT BUT I'M NOT SURE WHICH IS BEST. DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE?

A I know! Who would have thought that spiralizers could come in so many different varieties? I have a Benriner Turning Slicer, which was the only one on the market when I bought it some years ago. You press your courgette on a spike that is attached to a handle, and as you turn the handle the vegetable is pushed against a cutter, and out comes the 'spaghetti'. It's fun, and great if you're

interested in making raw food or low-carb dishes. But can I just ask; do you have a juicer tucked away that you hardly use these days? Well, I hate to say it, but maybe the spiralizer will go the same way after a week or two? I mean, how many times do you want to eat courgette pasta? And if you do, you can get pretty much the same effect by slicing vegetables thinly along the length then cutting down into fine pasta-like lengths.



Q WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO PREPARE AND COOK A GLOBE ARTICHOKE?

A Very simply. Choose a firm, heavy one and trim the stems level. Put it into your largest saucepan, cover with cold water and simmer for about 45 minutes, or until you can pull off one of the lower leaves easily. Drain well. Serve with ramekins of melted butter, so everyone can pull the bracts off one by one, dip the bases in melted butter, suck off the delicious

artichoke flesh, then discard the rest of the bract. When you get to the centre, use a sharp knife to cut off the spikey 'choke' and eat the tender base below, with more melted butter. It's messy but out-of-this-world delicious! You can prepare the artichokes more by cutting away the inner 'choke' before cooking, as they do in restaurants, but I let my friends and family do it themselves.



Q WHEN I TRY TO BREAD SOFT CHEESE OR COURGETTES IT ALWAYS FALLS APART. WHAT AM I DOING WRONG?

A Camembert or Brie, are delicious 'breaded', as are pieces of courgette, aubergine and button mushrooms. Make sure the pieces are dry, then dip them first into beaten egg, or a mixture of cornflour and cold water that is thick enough to coat them, then into fine, dry, crumbs

('panko', from Waitrose, are my favourite). Then, deep-fry in rapeseed oil heated to 180C/350F or until a small piece of bread thrown in immediately sizzles and rises to the surface. Remove with a perforated spoon, drain on kitchen paper, and eat immediately. Yum.



ROSE'S FAVOURITE SAVOURY BAKES

These hearty oven dishes will satisfy even the mightiest appetite

Cheese Bake: Layer stale bread and pieces of cheese in a casserole. Cover with beaten egg and milk, bake until golden brown.

Oven-baked Ratatouille: Toss chopped red peppers, purple onions, aubergine, courgettes, and tomatoes into a casserole. Add oil and

crushed garlic. Cover and bake at 180C/350F/Gas 4, for 45-60 minutes.

Potato Gratin: Slice potatoes thinly, rinse,

season, and add crushed garlic, oil and rosemary. Layer in a casserole. Bake for 1 1/2 hours.

Asparagus and Goat's

Cheese: Put cooked asparagus in a casserole, cover with a white sauce, dot with goat's cheese, scatter with crumbs and bake until golden.

Have you got a question to ask Rose? Email rose@cookveg.co.uk or find us on Twitter or Facebook



LOVE YOUR HEALTH

Independent health food shops are a veggie's utopia, stocked with an abundance of interesting products to suit any taste. Now you can locate your nearest shop with **findahealthstore.co.uk**

If you've ever examined a food label, worried about the chemicals in your face cream or questioned the environmental impact of your washing up liquid, then chances are you will find plenty to interest you in a specialist health store. These shops are more than places to buy your bran and vitamins, they have a wealth of knowledge on all things natural, ethical and environmental.

A helpful hand

This weekend, why not discover the difference between, and considerable benefits of, shopping in independent health stores rather

than the mass-market outlets? With thousands of different natural products to choose from, these health food hubs are a one-stop shop for everything natural and environmentally friendly. From wholefoods, organics, raw foods, allergy-free foods, vitamins, minerals, herbs and amino acids to sports nutrition, essential fatty acids, cruelty-free bodycare, household cleaners and recycled paper products, health food shops stock products from far and wide to cater to any ethically-aware shopper. Some even carry eco-paints, organic clothing and vegetarian pet foods!

Friendly faces

Health stores have staff who are qualified and experienced in helping with a wide range of conditions, including acne, allergies, children's health, digestion, energy, fatigue, hair, skin, heart health, menopause, sleep disorders, weight control and much more. Don't be embarrassed to talk about any health concern, they've heard it all before, and helped too!

Plus, health food stores come in all shapes and sizes, so find the one that suits you! That's the beauty of independent shops – they are quirky, passionate and individual, a huge improvement on the clone high street chains.

THERE ARE MORE THAN 1,000 INDEPENDENT HEALTH STORES ACROSS THE UK, TO FIND YOUR NEAREST, VISIT THE VIRIDIAN NUTRITION STOCKIST LOCATOR AT **FINDAHEALTHSTORE.CO.UK**.

FREE for you online this month

Don't forget, there's plenty more veggie recipes, tips and features from your favourite cookery magazine online this month



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Get more from the foods you love by teaming them with other ingredients. Find out more at www.cookveg.co.uk/powercouples

FREE PASTA RECIPES

It's cheap, easy and delicious, so we've rounded up our favourite meat-free pasta recipes. Visit www.cookveg.co.uk/pasta-perfection to check out our sensational dishes. Which one will you make?



1000+ VEGGIE RECIPES

Log on to www.cookveg.co.uk for over 1,000 vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free meals and snacks. Search by what you have in your fridge, or become inspired by our recipe collections.

1

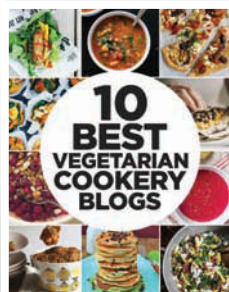
WIN GREAT PRIZES

This month, enjoy a bumper selection of prizes including £100 of Lakeland vouchers, pizza cookers, juicers and more. Get your hands on the goodies by visiting www.cookveg.co.uk/win



2

3



CHECK OUT OUR TOP 10 BLOGGERS

We've rounded up the most inspirational and influential meat-free bloggers for you to bookmark today. Discover fabulous photography and mouth-watering meal ideas at www.cookveg.co.uk/bloggers

4

5



www.cookveg.co.uk

NATURALLY DELICIOUS

Hit vegetarian blogger **Erin Alderson's** recipes are brimming with an amazing array of fresh flavours. But, her approach to healthy eating hasn't always been so effortless...

VISIT: WWW.NATURALLYELLA.COM

RAVISHING
RHUBARB



Pay a quick visit to the beautiful blog Naturally Ella, with its extensive range of recipes and seasonal ingredients, and you'd be forgiven for thinking the creator Erin Alderson (her initials are 'Ella') was born with an appetite for colourful vegetarian food and a spiralizer in her hand. But, her vegetarian cooking journey has been slow and steady and she is entirely self-taught. "I have early memories of my mother cooking a few of her favourite dishes such as homemade pizza. But, as I got older, we became the typical American family who is too busy to eat a healthy, home-cooked dinner together," she says.

A turning point

It wasn't until her father's health took a turn for the worse that she decided to re-think what she was putting into her body, and discovered that eating well is about feeling good. "I was at the heaviest weight I'd been in my life during college. I didn't feel good, but trying to find the motivation and to eat healthier felt like a daunting challenge. That is, until my father suffered a major heart attack and had quadruple bypass. This life experience was a wake-up call to care more about what I put in my body," she adds.

Seasonal all the way

"I slowly started to teach myself to cook vegetarian dishes and my blog was a way to document my healthy eating. At first, I had no clue what I was doing, but I steadily increased my repertoire with daily practice." Then, when her and her boyfriend (now husband) moved, there was a shift in her approach and she became inspired by the seasons. "We moved to a small town and I stumbled upon a farm that ran a u-pick CSA (Community Supported Agriculture).

Every week I would head out to the farm and pick what was available. This was the best hands-on education about food I'd had up until that point. I stopped cooking from recipes and learned to cook with what was in season. I also let the wonderful farmers' markets and local chefs influence my recipes."

Get the knowledge

"Over the years, my blog moved from sharing my triumphs and failures as a new cook, to a site devoted to inspiring others to find a passion in vegetarianism. Providing that inspiration is what keeps me sharing recipes weekly and if my blog can play a small part in that, I'll be forever grateful."

NOODLES WITH KALE AND SPICY RHUBARB SAUCE



Serves 2

Ready in 35 mins

1 tbsp oil
40g chopped onion
1 tsp ginger, minced
250g rhubarb
1/2 tsp dried chillies, crushed
60ml water
2 tbsp honey
pinch of salt
150g gluten-free noodles
2 handfuls of kale

To serve
coriander
lime wedges

1 In a saucepan, heat the olive oil over a medium heat. Add the onion and ginger, cooking for 1-2 minutes. Next, stir in the rhubarb, water, honey and chillies. Let simmer until the rhubarb has broken down and the sauce comes together. Add a pinch of salt and taste to adjust seasonings (if you want it sweeter, add more honey or if you want it spicier, add more chillies).

2 Prepare the noodles according to packet directions, drain, and set aside. Shred the kale and place in a large bowl. Once the noodles and rhubarb are done, toss with the kale. Top with coriander and lime wedges to serve.

PER SERVING: 153 CALS, 3.8G FAT

MAY'S BEST

Cooking with what's in season opened up Erin's creativity in the kitchen. Here are May offerings:

SORREL: Add the little shield-shaped leaves of sorrel to salads, or layer with cream cheese and cucumber in sandwiches

RHUBARB: Celebrate the arrival of spring by roasting rhubarb with sugar, vanilla and orange zest

GOOSEBERRIES: These tart little berries start appearing in May. Try them with goat's cheese for a dish with a difference

ROASTED POTATO, CHICORY AND ROCKET SALAD



Serves 4

Ready in 30 mins

For the Roasted Potatoes

450g red potatoes
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp smoked paprika
1/2 tsp garlic powder
1/2 tsp sea salt

For the salad

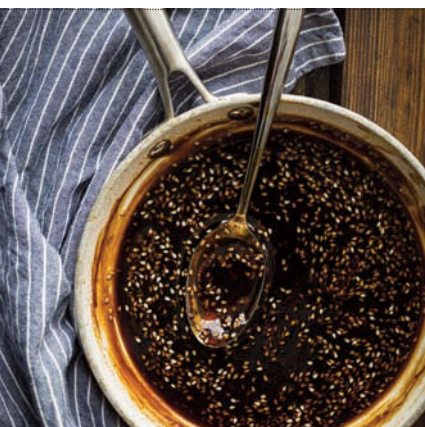
3 red chicory
80g rocket
200g cooked quinoa, cooled
50g sliced almonds
60g vegetarian Dolcelatte cheese

For the dressing

3 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 tbsp honey
pinch of salt
pinch of black pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6 and bring a pot of water to a boil. Slice the potatoes in half and place in boiling water. Parboil until the potatoes are just tender, 5-6 minutes. Place in a roasting pan and toss with olive oil, smoked paprika, garlic powder and sea salt. Roast the potatoes in the oven for 20-25 minutes, or until they're lightly browning. Remove from the oven and let cool slightly.

2 Trim the bottoms of the chicories and



discard. Chop the rest into slices and place in a large bowl. Add the rocket, quinoa, almonds and cheese. Add the potatoes and toss until combined.

3 In a small jar with a lid, combine all the ingredients for the dressing and shake until well combined. When ready to serve the salad, pour over the dressing and toss once more.

PER SERVING: 376 CALS, 22.96 FAT

BROCCOLI CHICKPEA BOWL WITH TERIYAKI



Serves 2

Ready in 40 mins

For the Teriyaki

1 tsp sesame seeds

1 tsp cornstarch

120ml soy sauce

2 tbsp mirin

2 tbsp dark brown sugar

1 tsp minced garlic

1 tsp grated ginger

1 tsp sesame oil

Broccoli Bowl

400g cooked brown rice

2 tsp olive oil

1/2 bunch spring onion, diced

300g broccoli florets

180g chickpeas, drained and rinsed if using canned

sesame seeds, for topping

1 In a frying pan, cook the sesame seeds over a medium heat until the fragrant and begin to darken. Set aside.

2 Stir together the cornstarch with two teaspoons of warm water. Set aside.

3 Make the teriyaki: In a saucepan, combine the soy sauce, mirin, brown sugar, garlic, ginger, and 180ml of water. Bring it to a low boil, then reduce the heat and stir in the cornstarch mixture. Continue stirring until the sauce thickens. Remove from the heat and stir in the sesame oil and sesame seeds.

4 To make the broccoli bowl, heat the oil in a frying pan over a medium-low heat. Stir in the spring onion and cook until soft. Add the broccoli florets and cook for one minute. Add three tablespoons of water, cover, and let the broccoli steam until tender. Remove the lid, stir in chickpeas and cook until the chickpeas are warm. Add a little of the teriyaki sauce and cook for one minute more. Serve on a bed of rice.

PER SERVING: 709 CALS, 18.76 FAT

COOKERY SCHOOL

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LESSON No1

PERFECT PESTO PARTNERS

FROM RACHEL DEMUTH,
DEMUTH'S COOKERY SCHOOL



Pesto is versatile and great for preparing quick meals. Brush onto a disc of puff pastry and top

with cherry tomatoes and mozzarella before baking until golden. Or, stir through cooked pasta and add whatever you fancy such as roasted tomatoes, asparagus tips or antipasti.

I like combining pesto with a little crème fraîche to make a rich pasta sauce. Add pesto to wraps or sandwiches, or use it as a dressing (just add more oil).

You can make pesto with just basil, or a mixture of basil and rocket, watercress or spinach (try the mixed bags). In spring, pep up your pesto with foraged wild garlic or even dandelion leaves. Or, ring the changes with different nuts such as roasted hazelnuts, walnuts or almonds. For spicy red pesto, simply add sun-dried tomatoes and chilli. Just make sure that the hard cheese you add is suitable for vegetarians.

WE LOVE

Polenta



Made by grounding corn finely into meal, polenta is a staple of every Italian's storecupboard. We love Cooks & Co's Countryman's Polenta, £1.79.

THE ESSENTIAL RECIPE

Basic Pasta Dough

Measure the rice in volume using either cups or a measuring jug. Place in a sieve and rinse really well until the water runs clear (this removes the starch which can make rice sticky). Pop in a suitably sized saucepan with a pinch of salt and double the volume cold water. Bring the water to the boil then turn the heat down to its lowest setting. Place a lid on the saucepan and cook for 10 minutes. Check the rice and cook for longer if required.



3 MUST-MAKE SALAD DRESSINGS

MAKE MORE OF YOUR GREEN LEAVES...



VEGGIE CAESAR

Mix together 5 tbsp mayonnaise with 2 tbsp white wine vinegar. Add 20g grated vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese and 1 crushed garlic clove. Season with salt and pepper.



CLASSIC ITALIAN

Crush 1 garlic clove with ½ tsp salt. Mix together 5 tbsp olive oil, 2 tbsp white wine vinegar and 1 tbsp mixed dried herbs (try thyme, basil and parsley). Mix the garlic with the dressing.



PESTO DRESSING

Blend together 50g fresh basil leaves, 1 crushed garlic clove, 1 tbsp toasted pine nuts, 8 tbsp Farrington's Mellow Yellow rapeseed oil and 10g grated vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese.

How to master: PIZZA DOUGH

1.



GET MIXED UP

Put 500g Allinson strong white bread flour, 1/2 tsp salt and 1 yeast sachet (7g) into a bowl and mix. Make a well in the centre.

2.



SWEET THANG!

Stir 2 tsp Billington's unrefined golden caster sugar into 325ml warm water and then pour in the well.

3.



KNEAD DEEP

Work from the outer edge and mix all the ingredients into the water. Turn the dough out onto a floured surface and knead for 10 minutes.

4.



ON THE RISE

Flour the dough, cover with clingfilm and leave for 15 minutes. Shape, top and bake.

Make your best ever...

RISOTTO

with Marco Pierre White



- ★ Use a heavy-based saucepan or casserole dish when making risotto, as you don't want it burning as you cook.
- ★ Always work the rice, stirring it in the pan. This way the rice cooks evenly, which is very important.

★ Add the stock bit by bit, allowing the rice to absorb it, before adding the next bit of stock. This way you get the great creamy texture that a good risotto should have.

★ Cook the risotto to your own preference. Everyone likes their risotto slightly different. I like mine quite wet; others prefer it a bit drier. As a finishing touch, once the risotto is cooked I always mix in a little butter – not too much – and some grated vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese. Allow a few seconds for these to begin to melt in.

TIPS COURTESY OF MARCO PIERRE WHITE AND KNORR STOCK POTS. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.KNORR.CO.UK

KIT LIST

Make your Italian food perfetto...



Katie Alice English Garden Acacia Chopping Board, £11.99, www.creative-tops.com

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www.sunitafoods.co.uk and good health shops

These vegan spreads are made to authentic Italian recipes and are great on toasted bread, in sandwiches, stirred into sauces or to pep up pizzas.



Mozzarella and Ricotta Cheese Making Kit, £22.50, www.bigcheesemakingkit.com

This simple cheese making kit contains everything you need to make fresh mozzarella and ricotta in under one hour! Just add milk and you're on the way.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND SAGE ARANCINI

Serves 4

Ready in 1 hr

40g unsalted butter
½ onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
125g risotto rice
50ml vegetarian white wine
250ml vegetable stock
200g butternut squash, peeled
and cut into pieces
5g fresh sage, chopped
100g breadcrumbs
60g Boursin Black Pepper
Portions
vegetable oil, for frying

For the egg wash

2 free-range eggs, beaten
50ml milk

1 Place a frying pan on a medium heat. Add the butter, onion and garlic and cook for 1-2 minutes until the onion softens.

2 Add the risotto rice to the pan and stir to coat the rice in the butter.

3 Add the wine and cook, stirring, until dissolved.

4 Pour the stock into a separate pan and bring to the boil before simmering gently.

5 Add a ladle of stock to the risotto and cook, stirring, until completely dissolved. Add the next ladleful and keep cooking

and stirring until all the stock has been used up and the rice is cooked, about 20 minutes.

6 Bring a pan of water to the boil and add the butternut squash. Cook until tender, then drain.

7 Remove the cooked risotto from the pan and place in a mixing bowl. Add the butternut squash and mash with a fork. Add the sage and season the mix to taste.

8 Shape the Boursin into 5g balls, then shape the risotto around it. This should make around 12 arancini balls.

9 Make the egg wash by mixing the beaten egg and milk together. Dip the arancini balls in the egg wash and then roll in the breadcrumbs until completely

“Arancini are the perfect snack to serve guests when entertaining. You can make them in advance and then fry them at the last minute to make them hot, crispy and tasty!”

covered. Repeat, setting the finished balls to one side.

10 Pour 3cm of vegetable oil into a large saucepan and heat until 170C/350F. Gently cook the balls for 1-2 minutes, remove from the pan and drain on kitchen paper.

PER SERVING: 466 CALS, 28.3G FAT



Use up
left-over
risotto and
make these!



FOOD HISTORY

Here at *Cook Vegetarian*, there are some foods that we have to capitalise the first letter. This is usually because it's named after a place – like Cornish pasty, or Cheddar cheese – but sometimes it's a dish that has been named after a person.

A Margherita pizza is one of these dishes, and legend has it that it's named after Queen Margherita of Savoy who visited (fairly) newly unified Italy in 1889. During this visit, chef Raffaele Esposito and his wife created a pizza to mimic Italy's flag, tomatoes for the red part, mozzarella for white and basil for green. The Espositos named it after the queen, and the topping proved very popular.

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TROLLEY

Dash!

Stuck for what to eat tonight? This fruity tart and salad is super easy



BLACKBERRY AND GOAT'S CHEESE TARTS



Serves 2-4
Ready in 35 mins

1 tbsp olive oil
15g butter
2 red onions, halved, thinly sliced
2 tsp caster sugar
150g blackberries
3 stems fresh thyme, leaves torn from stems, plus a little extra for garnish
salt and freshly ground black pepper
375g packet ready-rolled chilled puff pastry
beaten free-range egg, for glazing
100g Somerset goat's cheese, sliced into four

To finish

1 tbsp red wine vinegar
2 tbsp olive oil
½ tsp caster sugar
½ tsp Dijon mustard

100g mixed rocket, spinach and watercress salad
175g raspberries

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6. Heat the oil and butter in a pan, and fry the onion for five minutes. Add the sugar and fry for five minutes, stirring more frequently until lightly browned.
- 2 Mix in the blackberries and thyme then season.
- 3 Unroll the pastry then cut four heart shapes, transfer to a wetted baking sheet and prick the centre of each, leaving a border (about 2cm).
- 4 Brush the pastry with egg, then pile the onion and blackberry mix in the centre of each heart. Bake for 10 minutes.
- 5 Top each with a slice of goat's cheese, a few extra thyme leaves and some salt and pepper. Bake for 4-5 minutes more.
- 6 Meanwhile, fork the vinegar, oil, sugar and mustard together in a bowl to make a dressing. Add a little salt and pepper then the salad leaves and raspberries and gently toss together.
- 7 Arrange one heart per serving for a starter, two for a main course on to plates with a little salad.

PER SERVING: 1,336 CALS, 98.9G FAT

CHEESE CHOOSE

IF YOU ENJOYED THE SOMERSET GOAT'S CHEESE IN THIS RECIPE, HERE ARE THREE OTHER REGIONAL VEGGIE FROMAGES FOR YOU TO TRY



QUICKES RED LEICESTER,
£3 FOR 250G,
WWW.QUICKES.CO.UK

Like all Quicke's cheeses, this Red Leicester is produced by hand using traditional methods. It has a deliciously crumbly texture and will lift any Ploughman's or cheeseboard to new heights.



CORNISH BLUE POT, £18,
WWW.CORNISHCHEESE.CO.UK

Treat yourself to this pretty pot of Cornish Cheese's most mature blue. Robust, tangy and sharp, it's as beautiful on its own as it is in your cooking. It would make the perfect gift too.



GODMINSTER CHEDDAR,
£12.95 FOR 400G,
WWW.GODMINSTER.COM

Godminster is rich, buttery and intense. If you're looking for the crowning glory to your next cheeseboard, this Cheddar is bold enough to take centre stage.



— WIN! —

ONE OF TEN **£100** VOUCHERS TO SPEND AT OCADO

It's time to have your say in the most important awards in the world of vegetarianism



Fancy getting your hands on a £100 Ocado voucher? Simply tell us your favourites from the list of Veggie Awards-nominated companies opposite and send to the address, or head to www.cookveg.co.uk/awardsvoting to be in with a chance of winning.

WIN YOUR SHOPPING!

We've teamed up with online supermarket ocado.com to give ten lucky readers a shopping voucher worth £100!

You can shop on the move with the mobile app, Ocado on the Go. It delivers over 40,000 products, including a selection of delicious veggie options, big-name brands, a range of over 650 Ocado Own Label products and a growing non-food selection. Thoughtful

service such as colour-coded bags, receipts provided in date order, reminder texts with your driver's name, along with convenient hourly delivery slots will make your shopping experience a pleasure!

Ocado boasts vast vegetarian and vegan ranges, nominated in the Veggie Awards, including brands such as Quorn, Meet the Alternative, Secret Sausages, Dee's, Easy Bean and Tivall, with more to come later in the year.

GET INVOLVED!

The Veggie Awards are the UK's biggest meat-free awards and are your chance to tell the industry just what you think of their foods, restaurants, cookbooks and much more.

This year, for the first time, half of the

categories will be voted for by you – our readers – and the other half will be decided by a select set of judges who include Cook Vegetarian favourites Rose Elliot and Tim Maddams, and TV chefs such as Simon Rimmer and Anjum Anand.

So, what are you waiting for? This is your chance to shape the food we eat, the meals we're served and the books we're provided with. Cast your vote and change the way we live today!

For all the latest news, follow Ocado and Cook Vegetarian on Twitter, @Ocado or @CookVeg, and keep your eye out for the #veggieawards hashtag.

T&CS: THE VOUCHER NEEDS TO BE REDEEMED IN FULL IN 2015.

VOTE HERE OR ONLINE TO ENTER!

Complete this form by selecting one of the options. If your favourite isn't there tell us by ticking the 'other' box and filling it in. Send the completed form to

Cook Vegetarian Awards 2015, Marketing Department, 21-23 Phoenix Court, Hawkins Road, Essex, Colchester, CO2 8JY.

Or vote online at www.cookveg.co.uk/awards. Deadline for entries 12th of April

Best Ready Meal Brand for Vegetarians

SPONSORED BY 

- ☐ Amy's Kitchen
☐ Marks & Spencer
☐ Linda McCartney Foods
☐ Quorn
☐ Other _____

Best Meat Replacement Product

SPONSORED BY 

- ☐ Quorn Meat Free Sausages
☐ Quorn Meat Free Fillets
☐ Goodlife Sausages
☐ Quorn Meat Free Mince
☐ Other _____

Best Vegetarian Cheese Brand

SPONSORED BY 

- ☐ Vegusto
☐ Applewood
☐ Sheese
☐ Violife
☐ Cheezly
☐ Other _____

Best Vegan Brand

SPONSORED BY 

- ☐ Amy's Kitchen
☐ Fry's
☐ Alpro
☐ Vbites
☐ Other _____

Best Vegetarian Snack or Confectionery Brand

SPONSORED BY 

- ☐ Oreo
☐ Nakd
☐ Goody Good Stuff
☐ Quorn
☐ Other _____

Best Online Retailer for Vegetarians

SPONSORED BY 

- ☐ Holland & Barrett
☐ Tesco
☐ Waitrose
☐ Ocado
☐ Other _____

Best Vegetarian Online Resource

SPONSORED BY 


- ☐ The Vegan Society
☐ Cook Vegetarian
☐ The Vegetarian Society
☐ The Vegetarian Resource Group
☐ Other _____

Best Supermarket for Vegetarian Food Products

SPONSORED BY 

- ☐ Sainsbury's
☐ ASDA
☐ Waitrose
☐ Tesco
☐ Other _____

Best Restaurant Chain for Vegetarians

SPONSORED BY 

- ☐ Wagamama
☐ Pizza Hut
☐ Harvester
☐ Pizza Express
☐ Other _____

Best Veggie/Vegan Recipe Book

SPONSORED BY 

- ☐ River Cottage Veg Every Day
☐ Delia's Vegetarian Collection
☐ Rose Elliot - New Complete Vegetarian
☐ Yotam Ottolenghi - Plenty
☐ Other _____

Favourite Vegetarian Personality

SPONSORED BY 

- ☐ Russell Brand
☐ Natalie Portman
☐ Paul McCartney
☐ Morrissey
☐ Linda McCartney
☐ Joanna Lumley
☐ Other _____

Reader's Choice

SPONSORED BY 

- ☐ Goodlife New Range of Sausages
☐ Quorn Best of British Sausages
☐ Quorn Meat Free Mince
☐ Linda McCartney Sausages
☐ Other _____

Please complete your details in block capitals

Title _____ Initial _____ Surname _____ Signature _____

Address _____ Date _____ D.O.B _____

_____ Closing date 12/04/15

_____ Postcode _____

Contact number _____

Email _____

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The Weekend Project: Afternoon Tea

There's nothing more civilised than a spot of afternoon tea, so we asked Masterchef winner **Lisa Faulkner** to bake her favourite cakes perfect for that three o'clock fix...



LEMON MERINGUE SANDWICH COOKIES



Makes 12 cookies

Ready in 50 mins (plus 1 hr chilling)

250g plain flour
100g rice flour
250g salted butter, softened
75g golden caster sugar
finely grated zest of 1 lemon
1 free-range egg yolk

For the filling

200ml double cream
3 tbsp lemon curd
4 meringue shells, crushed

1 Sift the flours into a large bowl and make a well in the centre. Add the butter, sugar, lemon zest and egg yolk. Gradually work in the flour using your fingertips until the mixture comes together. Wrap in clingfilm and chill for 30 minutes. Preheat the oven to 150C/300F/Gas 2, and line a baking sheet with greaseproof paper.

2 Dust the work surface with a little flour and roll out the dough to a thickness of 5mm (¼ in). Cut into discs with a 6cm (2½ in) round cutter and place on the prepared baking sheet. Refrigerate for 30 minutes until firm.

3 Bake the biscuits for about 30 minutes until a pale golden colour, then transfer to a wire rack to cool.

4 Meanwhile, whisk the cream to soft peaks then fold through the lemon curd and crushed meringue. Spoon the mixture onto half of the biscuits then sandwich with the remaining biscuits.

PER COOKIE: 571 CALS, 40.8G FAT

BOOKSHELF

Recipes taken from *Tea & Cake with Lisa Faulkner** (£9, Simon & Schuster Ltd).

EARL GREY
TEA LOAF

Serves 8

Ready in 2 hrs 30 mins
(plus overnight soaking)

225g raisins
225g sultanas
125g dried figs, chopped
125g glacé cherries, halved
110g dried apricots, chopped
1 Earl Grey tea bag
110g light muscovado sugar
110g dark muscovado sugar
juice and zest of 1 orange
butter, for greasing
110g ground almonds
1 tbsp golden syrup
2 free-range eggs, beaten
450g self-raising flour
1 tsp ground mixed spice
100ml whole milk

You'll also need:

1 x 900g (2 lb) loaf tin

1 Combine the fruits in a large heatproof mixing bowl. Pour 300ml boiling water onto the tea bag and leave to brew for a minute or so. Discard the tea bag then dissolve the sugars in the hot tea, add the orange juice and zest, and pour over the fruit. Stir to combine, then cover and leave to soak overnight.

2 The next day preheat the oven to 150C/300F/Gas 2, and grease and line your loaf tin with greaseproof paper. Stir the ground almonds, golden syrup and beaten eggs into the soaked fruit mixture then sift in the flour and mixed spice. Stir to combine, adding the milk if the mixture seems a little stiff, then spoon into the lined tin. Bake for 2–2 ¼ hours, or until a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean. Transfer to a wire rack and leave to cool completely. Cut into thick slices and serve spread with butter.

PER SERVING: 683 CALS, 12.4G FAT



MADELEINES

Makes 10–12 madeleines
Ready in 50 mins

2 free-range eggs
100g caster sugar
125g plain flour
1 small tsp baking powder
70g butter, melted and cooled
25ml milk

You'll also need:

1 x 900g (2 lb) loaf tin

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6.

2 Whisk the eggs and sugar until they are light and fluffy. It needs to increase in volume by almost double. This takes about six minutes in a stand mixer on high. Fold in the other ingredients. Leave to stand for 20 minutes.

3 Brush the madeleine tray with melted butter, leave to set, then dust with a little flour, knocking out any excess. Gently spoon or pipe the madeleine batter into the moulds and bake for 8–10 minutes until lightly golden. Allow to cool in the tin for five minutes then turn out on to a wire rack to cool completely.

PER MADELEINE (12 MADELEINES): 124 CALS, 5.7G FAT

We're giving away 10 gift packs full of goodies for those of you with green fingers, worth £30 each. The Gift Pack includes a 100ml Gardener's Hand Cream, 100ml Foot Treatment Cream, 200ml Rose Geranium Bath Soak and a 200ml Rose Geranium Body Wash. **For a free brochure of Beauty Naturals' extensive range go to www.beautynaturals.com, or follow them on Twitter [@beautynaturals](https://twitter.com/beautynaturals) and facebook.com/beautynats.**

WORTH
£300!

Suitable for both vegetarians and vegans alike, Free & Easy foods and drinks are also free from wheat, gluten and dairy, as well as other allergens such as nuts, celery and mustard, and have been made without artificial additives and preservatives. Products from the Free & Easy range are available from Tesco, Ocado and all good health food shops, priced from £1.35. Visit www.healthyfoodbrands.co.uk

WORTH
£250!



WORTH
£190!

To find out more about the BakerStone Oven Box from La Hacienda, please visit www.lahacienda.co.uk. Head to our website to enter.



WORTH
£100!



LAKELAND

Lakeland has everything the cook needs and if you're stuck for inspiration, Lakeland has over 500 free recipes online and holds regular in-store demonstrations. Visit www.lakeland.co.uk for more information and visit our website to enter.



WORTH
£260!

We've teamed up with innovative cooking brand Russell Hobbs to give two lucky readers the chance to each win a hamper crammed full of stylish kitchen must-haves. Included are: a Granite 5-piece Knife Block Set, a 3-piece Ceramic Coated Pan Set, a Deluxe London 16-piece Stainless Steel Cutlery Set and 5-kg Stainless Steel Digital Scales. **Check out the full range online by visiting homewares.russellhobbs.com**

JANUARY SALE

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UP TO £14*



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Visit our website below to view our full range!
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Quote
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*Terms and Conditions apply, see online for full details. This is a limited offer. Saving is based upon first 3 issues.

TREAT YOURSELF!

These delightful dessert recipes are so tasty and simple, which means more time to enjoy them in the sunshine...

All of these delicious dessert recipes are created by food blogger Aimee Ryan, AKA www.wallflowergirl.co.uk. With a healthy take on scrumptious classics, she has creatively incorporated the versatile Nākd bars to boost the nutritional qualities of each opulent recipe. There are 18 gorgeous varieties of Nākd bars across three different ranges, which have caught the eye of health-conscious foodies thanks to their wholefood approach. Instead of heavy processing, sugary syrups and mysterious additives, Nākd relies on tasty raw fruit, nuts and natural flavours all rolled together. That's it... and nothing else! They're nutritional powerhouses bursting with natural raw ingredients, are wheat-, dairy- and gluten-free, vegan and some of the bars even count as one of your five-a-day. Any more natural and you'd have to peel them!



NĀKD CHOCOLATE MOUSSE POTS

Serves 4; Ready in 40 mins

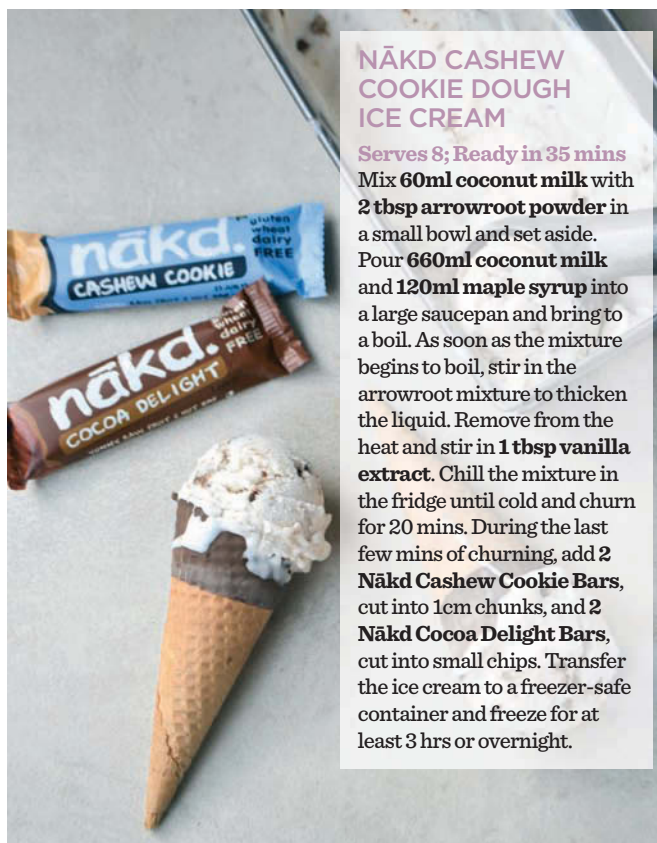
For the mousse, scoop the flesh out from **2 ripe avocados** and add to a blender, along with **8 tbsp cocoa powder**, **8 tbsp agave nectar** and **120ml dairy-free milk**. Blend until smooth and creamy. Divide equally between your serving glasses. Leave in the fridge for at least 30 mins before serving. For the topping, add **4 Nākd Cocoa Delight bars** to a food processor and grind until it turns to rubble. To serve, spoon the crumbled Nākd bars on top of the mousse pots and top with a few **edible flowers**. Enjoy!



NĀKD MINI STRAWBERRY CHEESECAKES

Serves 6; Ready in 45 mins

Grease a muffin tin. Chop **4 Nākd Strawberry Crunch Bars** in a food processor and divide them into 6 sections. Press firmly into the bottom of the muffin tins or silicon trays to make 6 bases. Blend together **65g cashew nuts** (soaked overnight), **60ml agave nectar**, **60ml melted coconut oil** and **1 tsp vanilla extract** until it makes a smooth mixture. Pour the mixture onto each of the cheesecake bases to the top. Make the strawberry swirl by blending together **3 stoned dates** and **6 large strawberries** then dropping a few dots of the mixture onto the top of the cheesecakes. Use a skewer to gently swirl around. Place in the freezer overnight. Sit at room temperature before serving.



NĀKD CASHEW COOKIE DOUGH ICE CREAM

Serves 8; Ready in 35 mins

Mix **60ml coconut milk** with **2 tbsp arrowroot powder** in a small bowl and set aside. Pour **660ml coconut milk** and **120ml maple syrup** into a large saucepan and bring to a boil. As soon as the mixture begins to boil, stir in the arrowroot mixture to thicken the liquid. Remove from the heat and stir in **1 tbsp vanilla extract**. Chill the mixture in the fridge until cold and churn for 20 mins. During the last few mins of churning, add **2 Nākd Cashew Cookie Bars**, cut into 1cm chunks, and **2 Nākd Cocoa Delight Bars**, cut into small chips. Transfer the ice cream to a freezer-safe container and freeze for at least 3 hrs or overnight.

NĀKD BARS ARE WIDELY AVAILABLE IN TESCO, ASDA, SAINSBURY'S, MORRISONS, WAITROSE, HOLLAND & BARRETT, INDEPENDENT HEALTH FOOD SHOPS AND WWW.EATNAKD.CO.UK

ADVICE



SPOONS

3 Teaspoons =
1 Tablespoon
8 Tablespoons =
½ Cup
1 Quart =
4 Cups

VOLUME

millilitres	oz/pints
30	1fl oz
50	2fl oz
100	3 ½ fl oz
150	5fl oz or ¼ pint
200	7fl oz or ⅓ pint
300	10 fl oz or ½ pint
500	18fl oz
1 litres	1 ¾ pints
1.2 litres	2 pints
2 litres	3 ½ pints

CUPS

cups	grams
1 cup flour	150g
1 cup brown sugar	175g
1 cup butter	225g
1 cup raisins	200g
1 cup ground almonds	110g
1 cup uncooked rice	200g
1 cup grated cheese	110g



THE REALLY USEFUL GUIDE

Cooking can be a bit of a minefield with its tricky conversions, Americanisms aplenty and countless other baffling cooking translations. Well no sweat, this veggie-friendly conversion guide will make life in the kitchen that little bit easier...

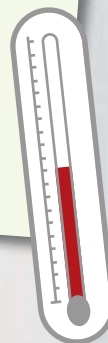
WEIGHT

grams	oz
5g	1/8oz
10g	1/4oz
25/30g	1oz
50g	1 ¾oz
70g	2 ½oz
100g	3 ½oz
150g	5 ½oz
200g	7oz
300g	10 ½oz
400g	14oz
600g	1lb 5oz



TEMPERATURES

gas mark	celsius	fahrenheit
1/2	120	250
1	135	275
2	149	300
3	162	325
4	176	350
5	190	375
6	204	400
7	218	425
8	232	450
9	246	475



CHEESES TO APPROACH WITH CAUTION

The world of cheese can be a realm where vegetarians often slip up. Here's a list of cheeses that aren't always veggie

Emmentale
Gruyère
Gorgonzola
Manchego
Parmesan
Parmigiano Reggiano
Pecorino Romano
Vacherin

GLUTEN-FREE GRAINS

Amaranth
Buckwheat
Corn
Oats (check packet if coeliac)
Quinoa
Rice



PERFECT VEGGIES TO ROAST

Aubergine	Courgette	Squash
Beetroot	Jerusalem artichoke	Swede
Carrot	Parsnip	Tomato
Celeriac	Potato	Turnip

COOK UP A FUN DINNER WITH FRY'S

These simple and healthy Gourmet Schnitzel Butternut Bowls are perfect for those of us who want to impress guests!

GOURMET SCHNITZEL BUTTERNUT BOWLS



Serves 2-4

Ready in 35 mins

2 Fry's Golden Crumbed Schnitzels
2 tbsp oil
2 small butternut halves, sliced
pinch of salt and black pepper
150g mixed vegetables, diced (eg sweetcorn, carrots, peppers, peas and green beans)
pinch of rosemary
1 tbsp margarine
a handful of almonds, finely chopped
2 tsp warmed honey (or agave syrup)
1/2 tsp cinnamon
handful of grated vegetarian cheese (optional)
coriander, to garnish

1 Cut the butternut in half, then lengthways before removing the pips and scooping out the flesh. Place the halves, cut side-up, and the flesh, into an ovenproof dish. Season with salt and pepper and bake until soft.

2 For the stuffing, cook the Fry's Schnitzels in oil until golden brown, or bake them in the oven according to packet instructions. Allow the Schnitzels to cool before cutting into strips. Set aside. Prepare the vegetables (fry or boil them according to your preference) and season with rosemary and salt.

3 In a large bowl, mix together the schnitzels, mixed vegetables, margarine and almonds. Once the butternut squash is cool, brush the hollows with honey and cinnamon and add the stuffing. Add a layer of cheese and garnish with coriander.



THE FRY'S FAMILY STORY

From small innovative beginnings in the Fry's family kitchen, Fry's has become an international success, exporting 27 vegan products to over 20 countries. What started back in 1992 as a labour of love by Wally and Debby Fry to seek tasty vegetarian alternatives, has led to a successful business that focuses on creating the best

meat-free foods out there. Fry Group Foods is still owned and run, passionately, by the Fry's family (who are all still veggies!) and has grown in products and stature to the outstanding company it is today.

For more delicious and healthy recipes please visit
www.frysvegetarian.co.uk,

where you can download a free eCookbook. The Fry's range can be found at Morrisons, Holland & Barrett, Ocado and leading health food stores.



COOK VEGETARIAN PIPING HOT

Here you'll find an exciting selection of all the best veggie food, appliances and places to visit we've discovered this month



HEALTHY SPREAD

Koko Dairy-free Spread is a brand new, coconut-based butter alternative and is free of any animal based ingredients or soya. Made with pressed coconut oil, it has less than half the

saturates of butter and naturally contains important medium chain fatty acids that many of us are missing in our diets. It's the perfect replacement for butter when you're baking and can provide a light and healthy layer when it's spread in your sandwiches!

Available from Waitrose and Healthfood stores from £1.95 for 500g



FIT FOR A KING

Rhassoul (pronounced rassoul) is a natural mineral clay that's been used for centuries by Moroccan women as a health-boosting, beauty tool for hair and skin care. This silicon, magnesium, calcium and potassium-rich clay can only be found in one area of river beds in the world, located in Morocco. Unlike soaps and shampoos, Rhassoul contains no surfactants and cleanses gently by absorbing impurities and excess oil. Rhassoul is an integral part of the hammam (a hot steam bath) ritual and is traditionally offered to young brides. The current Moroccan royal family reserves one of the many mountains that deposits Rhassoul strictly for personal use – so it's fit for a king!

Pick up 200g of Alassala Rhassoul Clay for £13.99 at independent health stores. You can also buy it online at www.alassala.co.uk

A CUT ABOVE THE REST

This Global 30th Anniversary Three Piece Knife Set is the ideal way to make any kitchen worktop glisten with the most gorgeous and pristine cutting utensils. The edges are ground steeply to a point and an acute angle resulting in a dramatically sharper knife, slicing through tough foods with ease! To correctly balance its knives, Global uses a hollow handle which is filled with just the right amount of sand, creating an expertly crafted and authentic finish.

Available at www.hartsofstur.com for the exclusive price of £149.99



EAT GREEN

River Green Café is a unique restaurant, café and events venue, featuring the best vegetarian and vegan food in an informal atmosphere. River Green nestles in the lovely village of Trowse, just 20 minutes walk from Norwich city centre, and combines jovial service with a lively atmosphere. During the daytime River Green is a relaxed café serving food, while on Sundays and evenings it offers a fine dining menu developed by award-winning veggie chef Jan Wise. With a great range of organic wine, local beers and ciders, it's the perfect place to catch up with friends over a drink or a fresh and healthy meal!

Visit www.rivergreencafe.co.uk for more information



DELICIOUS FUDGE

Vegan Sweet Treats makes the most delicious handmade vegan fudge and is available in ten scrumptious flavours including caramel, peanut butter, vanilla, chocolate and more. The freshly handmade fudge comes in 100g bags, which are packaged in eco-friendly boxes and can be posted straight to your door for a yummy sweet treat or delivered as a lovely gift. They're completely free from animal by-products and just what every fudge-loving vegan needs!

Grab a bag of fudge for £2.30 at www.vegansweettreats.org



REVITALISE YOUR GREENS

With one drizzle you can transform salads into a culinary delight with Farrington's Mellow Yellow dressings. Made using the award-winning rapeseed oil and the finest ingredients, you can choose from Balsamic Vinegar Dressing, Honey & Mustard or the Classic Vinaigrette. What's more, the dressings are made with no additives whatsoever. We'd recommend a Beetroot Bruschetta on a bed of watercress and rocket salad, topped with a splash of Mellow Yellow Balsamic Vinegar Dressing for the perfect lunchtime treat!

Pick up a 250ml bottle for £3.19 from Waitrose and Ocado



USE YOUR NOODLE

Clearspring has released its fantastic new Ramen Noodles, which are available in two delicious authentic flavours, Miso Ginger and Soya Sauce. They are the perfect dish for people with busy lives who need a quick and healthy meal and craves a flavoursome dish. The Ramen Noodles are crafted to give the best flavour and texture by combining carefully selected semi-wholewheat and brown rice flour. They are then steamed, rather than fried in oil, making them wonderfully low in fat, while the sachets of paste dissolve instantly in hot water to make a smooth and rich soup. Ready in just four minutes, these noodles are ideal for a light lunch or satisfying snack!

Available from Waitrose and Whole Foods Market for £4.29



FIND YOUR COLOUR

Discover beautiful hair with Herbatint, the original non-ammonia permanent herbal hair colour. Whether you want to cover your greys, enhance your natural tone or embrace a new blonder look, with 36 shades to choose from you'll easily find the colour that best suits you. Herbatint colours gently and effectively using eight certified organic herbal extracts to nourish and condition the hair. Free from resorcinol, parabens, fragrance and alcohol, it's also approved by PETA, FSC and the UK Vegan Society.

Available from independent health stores and pharmacies. For stockists and colour advice visit www.herbaint.co.uk or ring 0800 594 7706



BEAUTIFUL RADIANCE

Pacifica Natural Minerals Makeup Collection has unveiled its newest addition to the range, the award-winning Ultra CC Cream Radiant Foundation. This moisture-rich, colour-correcting cream has a subtle Jasmine fragrance and is created with coconut water, which actively

hydrates your skin. The range is 100% vegan, cruelty free and free of parabens, phthalates, mineral oil, peanut oil and petrolatum. It contains specially adapted colour-correcting minerals to match your own skin tone and its innovative formula works miracles with an inclusion of healthy coconut, kelp and ginseng, to help bring back radiance and a youthful glow instantly.

A 30ml tube is just £16.99 from www.lucyrose.biz



SPREAD SAVIOUR

If you're looking to include some Omega 3 into your vegetarian lifestyle then there's no simpler option than using TIANA's Organic Exquisite Omega 3 Spreadable. It's a premium quality, dairy-free, deliciously creamy butter alternative that is free from cholesterol and trans-fats. TIANA Organic Exquisite Omega 3 Spreadable is suitable for vegetarians and vegans, as it contains Omega 3 derived from top quality cold pressed flaxseed oil. Omega 3 fatty acids contribute to the maintenance of normal blood cholesterol levels and normal functioning of the heart, when included as part of a healthy balanced lifestyle. Without any coconut taste or aroma, it tastes as good as the best dairy butter and tastes divine when spread on sandwiches, toast and cooked with vegetables, pasta, rice or potatoes.

TIANA Organic Exquisite Omega 3 Spreadable costs £5.99 from Holland and Barrett, Wholefoods Market and all good health stores nationwide. Visit www.tiana-coconut.com for more information





NEVER ONE TO REST ON ITS LAURELS

Uncle Roy's has some great additions to its innovative ranges, to keep you coming back for more...

Winner of 33 Great Taste Awards and three 2014 World Hot Sauce Champion Awards, Uncle Roy's has never been one to let its loyal fan-base by resting on its laurels. The specialist condiments company goes above and beyond to passionately concoct the most delectable and curious of spreads, blazing a trail in its path.

New ideas, big flavours

This year, Uncle Roy's has added a Natural Honey Essence to the extensive range, bringing the tally of natural essences and extracts to 109! This sought-after range includes just about every single nut, flower, herb, seed, vegetable, dairy, spirit, spice and



brown note flavour that your curious taste buds could ever wish to experience. Despite the name, the honey and dairy flavoured extracts or essences are actually suitable for vegans.

The entire range has proved popular with chefs and foodies alike and Uncle Roy's distinctive green bottles have been spotted in the background of many a TV kitchen! Production had to be boosted recently due to Paul Hollywood incorporating one of Uncle Roy's creations in his Blackcurrant & Liquorice Swiss Roll, as it seems that everybody in the UK craved to try this incredible and unconventional recipe.

Finest preserves

The latest recruits to Uncle Roy's comestible gang of concoctions make life in the kitchen that little bit easier and are great ingredients for a summertime cheesecake. Why not cut

corners with the latest in the Finest Preserves range – the Brilliant Blackcurrant Curd produces amazing results, whereas the inclusion of the Tangy Lime Curd will brighten any lacklustre bake!

The Extra Special Condiment range is the realm of the irresistible and unusual, with Uncle Roy tweaking an old favourite – the Onion Marmalade – and making it even more delicious and richly flavoured. The staff at Uncle Roy's were so taken aback by the complexities and unrivalled taste sensation of the freshly developed marmalade, they've even given it a new title – 'The Best' Onion Marmalade.

So, if you're a curious foodie who won't sit still until you've tasted the newest and best, have a try of the new range. Uncle Roy's isn't modest when it comes to bold flavour and everything is made in small batches to ensure it has a quality that you can taste.

You can view the entire range of Uncle Roy's products and discover the secrets behind what makes them so special at www.uncleroys.co.uk

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Dinner at yours

We'd love to hear your news and views, favourite recipes and comments on anything you've read in Cook Veg, and you could win a fantastic prize!

Share the Love



Blogger brilliance

Just writing in to let you know that I absolutely adored the *Share the Love* feature with food and travel blogger Shelly West in the April issue. The photography was gorgeous (especially the ones including food) and I think it's great to see a magazine that gives bloggers a platform to share some lovely recipes!

Stephanie Durrant, by email

Thanks Stephanie, we've been following vegetarianventures.com quite obsessively for a while now and think it's great to collaborate with bloggers and writers who are as excited about veggie dishes as we are!

"I bought the March edition in search of ideas; boy did it deliver!"

Veggie shopping

I think it's about time that I embrace technology and start doing my weekly shop online (I'm an incredibly busy individual you see!). Which websites would you recommend?

Tom Graham, by email

There are so many great websites to choose from. Ocado.com is a really handy one due to its extensive list of products included in its own vegetarian section. You'd be hard pressed to beat the range that realfoods.co.uk offers though!

STAR LETTER

New recruits

I must let you know how thrilled I am with my first *Cook Vegetarian* magazine. About a year ago, my thirteen-year-old daughter asked if she could be a vegetarian. Up until recently, she's been living on either microwaveable ready meals, or bread and the veggies that accompanied our meat-centred family meals.

I bought the March edition in search of inspiration; boy did it deliver! It was full of tasty meals and stacked with so many good ideas, like the Posh Omelette. I also had no idea pasta could be so versatile. In fact, the Garlicky Crumbed Spaghetti is my new favourite meal. The entire family now goes vegetarian almost every other night and on those nights I don't miss the meat at all. There are so many wonderful flavours out there and I'd gotten lazy cooking up the standard meat and veggies in the same old way. Thanks, *Cook Vegetarian*, for opening my mind and delighting my taste buds. Can't wait for next issue!

Justine Hess, by email

So happy to hear that we (almost) have a family of veggie converts! Super happy to hear that the mag is helping with recipe inspiration too! Don't forget to check our website Justine, there's a vast array of recipes on there. Enjoy your cooking...

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WRITE IN TO WIN!

For your chance to win a Deluxe Blender Set by Salter, simply write in to tell us what you've enjoyed about the magazine this month. Or, share your favourite cookery tips via Twitter @cookveg or Facebook facebook.com/cookvegetarian. The Deluxe Blender Set is perfect for blending, mixing, grinding and chopping and brilliantly extracts nutrients and vitamins from super foods in minutes. Kick-start your morning with a glass full of goodness with this Deluxe Blender Set that's guaranteed to boost your health. Visit www.salterhousewares.com for more information.

What you're cooking this month...



@IncludingCake
has cooked a glorious looking cauliflower risotto with griddled veg, plus cashew butter to make it extra creamy!



@coconutty
went for a favourite go-to dish, a vegan African curry



@KateTIL
has kept with the vegan theme and knocked up this yummy-looking soya chilli

OUR FAVOURITE ONLINE COMMENT THIS MONTH...

"Falafel is goooooooooood, especially when it has a southern fried flavoured coating!" **@TahliaDysart**, via Twitter. Share your comments www.facebook.co.uk/cookvegetarian and on Twitter **@cookveg**

May's Recipes

All of the full-length recipes in this issue of *Cook Vegetarian* are listed here, but remember – there are lots more tips & recipe ideas throughout!



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The Bite-sized VEGETARIAN

Lucy Porter thinks trouble might be brewing when the comedian's husband suggests getting back to basics...

Early exposure to 70s sitcom *The Good Life* had a profound effect on my husband. If you're unfamiliar with the show, it was the story of a man – Tom Good – who tried to escape the rat race and become entirely self-sufficient. He turned his suburban home into a smallholding. Hilarious japes involving pigs, goats and snooty neighbours ensued.

Homemade happiness

Therefore, when my husband suggested this year that we should reject processed foods, and try to make more things from scratch, I was quite compliant. I had rosy visions of tending to our cabbage patch, harvesting eggs from our adorable chickens and looking awesome in dresses made from old curtains.

The reality has proved different. It turns out that neither of us has the time or inclination to tend vegetables, breed hens or sew. What my husband actually meant was that we should bake our own bread, make our own pasta and brew our own alcohol.

I have coped pretty well with the baking. Kneading is therapeutic, and I love being able to add extra ingredients: wholemeal flour, a handful of seeds and some chopped-up dates make for a tasty and nutritious sandwich loaf, whatever you choose to fill it with (lashings of Nutella is fine surely?). I have even enjoyed boiling our own bagels, and I make an indecently buttery brioche.

Similarly, making our own pasta is surprisingly fun. When I add spinach, saffron or beetroot and see the glorious colours you can achieve, I feel like a chef and a scientist rolled into one. I have even made black bean pasta, using semolina flour, which was an almighty faff, and

looked disgusting, but tasted okay.

Good for what ails you

The home-brewing has been, to my mind, less successful. This was my husband's passion. He is a real ale enthusiast, and insisted that he could create a micro-brewery in our garden shed. Once he'd spent a fortune on equipment from ebay, it turned out the shed was too cold, so our spare room/study ended up reeking of hops and yeast.

It wasn't just the smell, but also the constant bubbling and popping sounds of the fermentation process. It's like having an elderly, flatulent dog in the room, but instead of a warm, lovable mutt to cuddle there are just plastic buckets of brown gloop. I put up with this for weeks on end, with the promise that magical elixirs were just around the corner.

We reached what I thought was the final stage, which involved sterilizing endless bottles, some unpleasant business involving sucking on rubber tubing and the consultation of ABV, SRU and IBU calculators (don't know what any of those acronyms mean, they all sound like harrowing diseases to me).

And after all this, we still don't have a drinkable product, just dozens of bottles that have to be left to 'condition' for weeks, and that may or may not explode, depending on whether we did the calculations correctly. I have done some sums of my own, and I reckon all this brewing, pasta-making and baking will save us about £5 from our food budget – per year.

Frankly, I need a drink after all this hard work – I am just nipping down the shops to buy three bottles of beer for a fiver. I might pick up some dried pasta and a sliced, white loaf while I'm there.



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